

Jebusites and Jabeshites in the Saul and David Story-Cycles

I. Jebusite as a Clan Name

The ethnic/gentilic name “Jebusite” appears in almost all lists of the pre-Israelite nations ¹. In many cases it closes the list, probably due to the fact that according to biblical historiography David subdued the Jebusites, and hence they were the last group among the six/seven nations that the Israelites subjugated.

Nearly all references to the Jebusites appear in the gentilic form (יְבוּסִי), whereas the place name “Jebus” is mentioned only four times, always as another name for Jerusalem. Two references to Jebus appear in the story of the Outrage at Gibeah (Judg 19,10-11) and two in the Book of Chronicles’ account of David’s conquest of Jerusalem (1 Chr 11,4-5). All four references are late, dated to the post-exilic period ², and must be considered a back-formation of the group’s name. Historically, the city was never called by this name ³.

The gentilic nature of the name Jebusite is confirmed by its occurrence in a context that required a place name. This is evident in two border descriptions (Josh 15,8a; 18,16b), which delineate the Judah-Benjamin tribal border as passing “south of the side (כַּתֵּף) ⁴ of the Jebusite”, and in a town list (Josh 18,28) that mentions “the

¹ For the lists of pre-Israelite nations, see T. ISHIDA, “The Structure and Historical Implications of the Lists of Pre-Israelite Nations”, *Bib* 60 (1979) 461-490; E.C. HOSTETTER, “Geographic Distribution of the Pre-Israelite Peoples in Ancient Palestine”, *BZ* 38 (1994) 81-86, with earlier literature.

² For a late post-exilic date to the Gibeah story, see W. GROSS, *Richter, übersetzt und ausgelegt* (HTKAT; Freiburg 2009) 796-886, esp. 821-822, 877-880, with earlier literature.

³ G. FOHRER, *Studien zur alttestamentlichen Theologie und Geschichte* (1949-1966) (BZAW 115; Berlin 1969) 204; HALOT 382b. *Contra* C. UEHLINGER, who suggested that Jebusite is a pseudo-ethnonym derived from the place name Jebus; see “Die ‘Jebusiter’. Geschichtliche Hintergründe eines problematischen Jubiläums”, *Reformatio* 45 (1996) 256-263, esp. 261.

⁴ For the translation “side” rather than “shoulder”, “slope”, see N. NA’A-MAN, *Borders and Districts in Biblical Historiography. Seven Studies in Biblical Geographical Texts* (Jerusalem 1986) 109 n. 51, with earlier literature.

Jebusite, that is, Jerusalem”⁵. “Jebusite” in all three references is probably an ellipsis of the longer form, “[the city of] the Jebusite” (compare Judg 19,11b). Since the three sources refer to the pre-David era, their author deliberately avoided the name “Jerusalem” and instead used that of the group that according to biblical historiography lived in Jerusalem until David conquered it.

In light of the gentilic nature of the name Jebusite, scholars have considered it either a genuine name of a clan that settled in Jerusalem and its vicinity, or a fictive ethnonym invented by biblical scribes. The latter opinion rests on comparison with the other six pre-Israelite “nations” and on the assumption that some or all of them are fictive ethnonyms⁶. Many scholars have suggested that Canaanites, Amorites and Hittites are historical names of ancient Near Eastern peoples and do not represent defined ethnic groups who lived in Late Bronze and early Iron Age Canaan⁷. However, there are many parallels between the Hittite world and the Old Testament, in particular those pertaining to the spheres of state cult, divination, rituals and magic⁸. Hence, some scholars

Y. Elitzur suggested that *katef* is a term unique to the Benjaminite dialect; see “*Katef*, a Topographical Term in the Benjaminite Dialect”, *HUCA* 70-71 (1999-2000) 27-38. However, Jerusalem was located within the territory of Benjamin, and it is unlikely that the villages of Benjamin spoke a dialect that differs from that of the nearby capital city.

⁵ The LXX renders it “Jebus”. For discussion, see D. BARTHÉLEMY, *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament. Tome 1: Josué, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Rois, Chroniques, Esdras, Néhémie, Esther* (OBO 50/1; Fribourg – Göttingen 1982) 50.

⁶ UEHLINGER, “Die ‘Jebusiter’”, 256-263; U. HÜBNER, “Jerusalem und die Jebusiter”, *Kein Land für sich allein*. Studien zum Kulturkontakt in Kanaan, Israel/Palästina und Ebirnâri für Manfred Weippert zum 65. Geburtstag (eds. U. HÜBNER – E.A. KNAUF) (OBO 186; Freiburg – Göttingen 2002) 34-42.

⁷ For the vast scientific literature written on this subject, see J. VAN SETERS, “The Terms ‘Amorites’ and ‘Hittites’ in the Old Testament”, *VT* 22 (1972) 64-81; C. UEHLINGER, “The ‘Canaanites’ and Other <pre-Israelite> People in Story and History”, *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 46 (1999) 546-578; 47 (2000) 174-198, with earlier literature; I. SINGER, “The Hittites and the Bible Revisited”, *“I will Speak the Riddles of Ancient Times”*. Archaeological and Historical Studies in Honor of Amihai Mazar on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday (eds. A.M. MAEIR – P. de MIROSCHEDJI) (Winona Lake, IN 2006) 723-756; M. GERHARDS, “Die biblischen ‘Hethiter’”, *WdO* 39 (2009) 145-179, with earlier literature.

⁸ See recently Y. FEDER, *Blood Expiation in Hittite and Biblical Ritual*. Origins, Context, and Meaning (Writings from the Ancient World Supplement Series 2; Atlanta, GA 2011), with earlier literature.

posit that refugees from the crumbling Hittite Empire migrated to Canaan in the late second millennium BCE and settled in the high-land regions ⁹.

Scholars still debate the identity and historicity of the other three “nations” (Hivites, Perizzites and Girgashites), and consensus is yet to be reached ¹⁰. It is thus evident that the historicity of each of the seven “nations”, among them the Jebusites, should be studied in its own right.

All other claims raised against the historicity of the Jebusites also carry little weight. The lack of supportive evidence for the presence of the Jebusites in Jerusalem proves nothing, as no extra-biblical source is available to supply this information ¹¹. Also, the fact that some writers selected other ethnic names to describe the pre-Israelite inhabitants of Jerusalem (see Gen 5,18-20; Josh 10,5-6; Judg 1,4-8; Ezek 16,3.45) does not disprove the historicity of the Jebusites ¹². Biblical writers felt free to describe the antiquity of Jerusalem in a way that fitted their historiographical objectives and/or ideological messages and were not bound to a single fixed name. Finally, the observations that the list of six or seven nations is used to delineate between the pre-Israelites and Israelites, and that the scribes used the name Jebusite to distinguish between the people who lived in the pre-Israelite and Israelite city of Jerusalem, are irrelevant for establishing the historicity of the latter group ¹³. The historiographical objectives of the writers and the manner in which they used certain

⁹ N. NA'AMAN, “Queen Mothers and Ancestors Cult in Judah in the First Temple Period”, *Berührungspunkte. Studien zur Sozial und Religionsgeschichte Israels und seiner Umwelt. Festschrift für Rainer Albertz zu seinem 65. Geburtstag* (eds. I. KOTTSIEPER – R. SCHMITT – J. WÖHRLE) (AOAT 350; Münster 2008) 479-490, with earlier literature.

¹⁰ For discussions, see G.E. MENDENHALL, *The Tenth Generation. The Origins of the Biblical Tradition* (Baltimore, MD 1974) 142-163; H.M. NIEMANN, “Das Ende des Volkes der Perizziter. Über soziale Wandlungen Israels im Spiegel einer Begriffsgruppe”, *ZAW* 105 (1993) 233-257; A. LEMAIRE, “Hiw-wites, Perizzites et Girgashites: Essai d'identification ethnique”, *Stimulation from Leiden. Collected Communications to the XVIIIth IOSOT Congress Leiden 2004* (eds. H.M. NIEMANN – M. AUGUSTIN) (BEATAJ 54; Frankfurt am Main 2006) 219-224, with earlier literature.

¹¹ HÜBNER, “Jerusalem und die Jebusiter”, 34.

¹² UEHLINGER, “Die ‘Jebusiter’”, 260-261; HÜBNER, “Jerusalem und die Jebusiter”, 36-37.

¹³ HÜBNER, “Jerusalem und die Jebusiter”, 36-38.

elements in order to convey their messages to the readers do not indicate whether these elements are historical or fictive. Only detailed examination of each element can decide this matter.

The Amorite personal name Yabi/us/šum was derived from the verb YBS ("to be dry")¹⁴. One of the clans (*gāyu*) of the Ḫanum that lived in Upper Mesopotamia in the 17th century BCE was called Yabisa/Yabasa/Yabusu¹⁵. Hence, the gentilic name Jebusite (יְבוּסִי) might also be derived from this verb (for further discussion see below)¹⁶. Needless to say, no direct historical continuity exists between the Middle Bronze Age clan that lived in Upper Mesopotamia and the early Iron Age clan that settled in the Jerusalem region. But the sharing of names indicates that both were West Semitic, possibly with a distinct tribal identity.

The account of David's conquest of the stronghold of Zion (מִצְדֵּת צִיּוֹן) (2 Sam 5,7) reveals this site's status as the Jebusites' main centre. The phenomenon of a clan or tribe centered on a stronghold in which the tribal leader and elite might (temporarily or permanently) take their seat is known from the anthropological research¹⁷. Similar mountain strongholds are known in Edom¹⁸ and in the ancient Near Eastern documents¹⁹. The stronghold of Zion might have been the centre of the clan, while most of its members lived in the neighbouring region.

¹⁴ I.J. GELB, *Computer-Aided Analysis of Amorite* (Chicago, IL 1980) 21.

¹⁵ P. ABRAHAMI, "Yabisa / Yabasa / Yabusu", *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* 29 (1992) 25-26, with earlier literature.

¹⁶ MENDENHALL, *Tenth Generation*, 145.

¹⁷ M.B. ROWTON, "Dimorphic Structure and the Tribal Elite", *Al-Bahit. Festschrift Joseph Henninger* (Studia Institute Anthropos 28; St. Augustin 1976) 222-230; Id., "Dimorphic Structure and the Parasocial Element", *JNES* 36 (1977) 181-198.

¹⁸ M. LINDNER – E.A. KNAUF, "Between the Plateau and the Rocks: Edomite Economic and Social Structure", *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan VI* (Amman 1997) 261-264, with earlier literature; M. LINDNER – J. ZANGENBERG, "'Die ihr Nest zwischen den Sternen Bauen ...'. Zu den edomitischen Bergfestungen im Süden Jordaniens", *Vielseitigkeit des Alten Testaments. Festschrift für Georg Sauer zum 70. Geburtstag* (eds. J.A. Loader – H.V. Kieweler) (Frankfurt 1999) 281-316.

¹⁹ N. NA'AMAN, "David's Stronghold and Samson's Rock of Etam", *Let us Go up to Zion. Essays in Honour of H. G. M. Williamson on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (eds. I. Provan – M. Boda) (VTS 153; Leiden – Boston, MA 2012) 431-440, esp. 434-435, with earlier literature.

II. The Jebusites under King David

The main source for discussing the history of the Jebusites is the short account in 2 Sam 5,6-10. The episode in its present form is well built, with a planned chiasmic structure and linguistic repetitions²⁰. Its meticulous internal structure seems to indicate its original unity²¹. The text is difficult to interpret; hence the enormous amount of literature written in an effort to interpret it and to suggest a reasonable historical scenario of the related event²². I will avoid discussing the text in detail and concentrate on three issues that are essential for understanding the role of the Jebusites in the episode.

1. In the opening of the description (v. 6a), the Jebusites are described as “inhabitants of the land” (יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ). The expression appears frequently in biblical historiography in reference to the pre-Israelite inhabitants of the land (Gen 13,7; 34,30; 36,20; 50,11; Exod 23,31; Num 13,28; 32,17; Josh 2,9,24; 7,9; 9,24; 13,21; 24,18; Judg 1,32-33; 11,21; Neh 9,24; 1 Chr 22,18; 2 Chr 20,7) and conveys the sense of an autochthonic population²³. The Jebusites in v. 6a are described as the autochthonous inhabitants of the region (הָאָרֶץ), not specifically of the city of Jerusalem. Hence, the Jebusites lived in the Jerusalem region, not only in the city.

2. Scholars dispute the interpretation of the words of the Jebusite to David (v. 6bβ)²⁴. The interpretation that David is the subject (“he

²⁰ C.W. TYSON, “Who’s In? Who’s Out? II Sam 5,8b and Narrative Reversal”, *ZAW* 122 (2010) 546-557.

²¹ *Contra* Ch. SCHÄFER-LICHTENBERGER, “David und Jerusalem — ein Kapitel biblischer Historiographie”, *Eretz Israel* 24 (1993) 198*-201*, with earlier literature.

²² In addition to the commentaries, see TYSON, “Who’s In?”, 546-547, with earlier literature in note 1; SCHÄFER-LICHTENBERGER, “David und Jerusalem”, 197*-211*; I. WILLI-PLEIN, “Keine Eroberung Jerusalems. Zu Stellung und Bedeutung von 2 Sam 5 in der Davidshausgeschichte der Samuelbücher”, *For and against David. Story and History in the Books of Samuel* (eds. A.G. AULD – E. EYNIKEL) (BETL 232; Leuven 2010) 213-233.

²³ SCHÄFER-LICHTENBERGER, “David und Jerusalem”, 199*. In the prophetic books, the term “inhabitants of the land” refers to those who lived at the time of the prophet and thus differs from the historiographical texts where it refers to the pre-Israelite, autochthonous inhabitants of Canaan.

²⁴ J.C. POIRIER, “David’s ‘Hatred’ for the Lame and the Blind (2 Sam. 5.8A)”, *PEQ* 138 (2006) 27-33, with earlier literature.

will ward off the blind and the lame”) or that the blind and the lame are the subject (“the blind and the lame will ward you off”) make poor sense. In the MT, v. 6b β is presented as part of the Jebusite’s words, whereas in the Qumran scroll (4QSam^a), the word “if” was omitted and the text states “כִּי הִסִּיתָ [ו]”²⁵. This framing indicates that the Jebusite’s words to David are the result of incitement of the blind and lame—a meaning that is also expressed by the LXX. Accordingly, v. 6b may be translated thus: “And he [the Jebusite] said to David, ‘You will not come in here’, for the blind and the lame incited [him] saying, ‘David will not come here’” (compare 2 Kgs 18,32b). The Qumran and LXX rendering makes good sense, as it explains the reason for David’s hatred of the blind and the lame (v. 8a β). Were the latter considered seers able to predict the future? Did the Jebusites trust their divine assurance and cite it to David (compare 2 Kgs 19,32-33)?

3. Following the statement of conquest (v. 7) appears the following account (v. 8a): “And David said on the day: ‘Whoever smote a Jebusite, he should touch the *šinnôr* (וִינֵעַ בַּצֵּנֶר)”. Scholars have suggested many different interpretations of the latter expression, and it is redundant to repeat them here²⁶. In addition to v. 8a, the term *šinnôr* is mentioned in the Bible only once more (Ps 42,8 [ET 42,7]), “Deep calls to deep at the thunder of your cataract (צִנְרִיךְ); all your breakers and waves have swept over me”. The parallelism in this verse shows that *šinnôr* means a cataract of water; and in this light, David’s words in v. 8a α can be translated, “Whoever smote a Jebusite, let him touch the water cataract”. After the stronghold’s conquest (v. 7), the King ordered his men to remove the impurity that might have resulted from smiting the Jebusites by touching a cataract of dashing water. The sense of purification coincides with the following statement (v. 8b),

²⁵ E.D. HERBERT, “2 Samuel V 6: An Interpretative Crux Reconsidered in the Light of 4QSam^a”, *VT* 44 (1994) 340-348, with earlier literature; A. FINCKE, *The Samuel Scroll from Qumran. 4QSam^a Restored and Compared to the Septuagint and 4QSam^c* (Leiden 2001) 139-140; F.M. CROSS et al., *Qumran Cave 4, XII: 1-2 Samuel* (DJD 17; Oxford 2005) 118, 121.

²⁶ In addition to the commentaries, see SCHÄFER-LICHTENBERGER, “David und Jerusalem”, 202*-205*, with earlier literature in notes 108-114; T. KLEVEN, “The Use of *šnr* in Ugaritic and 2 Samuel V 8: Hebrew Usage and Comparative Philology”, *VT* 44 (1994) 195-204, with earlier literature; HALOT 1038a; WILLI-PLEIN, “Keine Eroberung”, 226-229.

which mentions the prohibition against blind and lame individuals entering the temple, no doubt on account of their assumed impurity.

I. Willi-Plein has suggested an alternative solution ²⁷: “V. 8 [...] berichtet von einer Maßnahme Davids nach der Einnahme der Fluchtbürg Zion, deren Hauptinhalt ein Schutzwort für die Jebusiter sein dürfte: David versuchte, die sehr verschiedenartigen Bevölkerungselemente seiner nunmehr eingenommenen, als Residenz gewählten und als Davidsstadt benannten oder umbenannten Stadt mit der Fluchtbürg Zion in die neue bzw. hier erst im Werden begriffene ‘Hauptstadt’ zu integrieren”.

Be that as it may, it is evident that this description includes no detail of the way the place was conquered. The text only states that “David took (וילכד) the stronghold of Zion” (v. 7). The statement is deliberately positioned at the centre of the chiasmic account ²⁸ and establishes that the stronghold, formerly under Jebusite control, fell into David’s hands.

What happened to the Jebusites after their stronghold was conquered? The text does not answer this question. This omission differs from many other biblical conquest stories, including David’s wars with Israel’s neighbours (2 Samuel 8; 12,31), which explicitly mentioned the fate of the defeated. Hence, the silence of the text on this matter might possibly be significant. The late story of the presence of Araunah the Jebusite in Jerusalem and David’s purchase of his threshing-floor in order to build an altar there (2 Sam 24,18-25) indicates that the story’s author considered the Jebusites as part of the city’s population ²⁹. Further support for the survival of the Jebusites in Jerusalem is provided by Zech 9,7b: “it [Ashdod] shall become like a clan in Judah, and Ekron shall be like the

²⁷ WILLI-PLEIN, “Keine Eroberung”, 229.

²⁸ TYSON, “Who’s In?”, 549-551.

²⁹ For the episode of the acquisition of the threshing-floor and the status of Araunah the Jebusite, in addition to the commentaries, see W. FUSS, “II Samuel 24”, *ZAW* 74 (1962) 145-164; M. COHEN, “II Sam 24 ou l’histoire d’un décret royal avorté”, *ZAW* 113 (2001) 17-40; H.-P. MATHYS, “Anmerkungen zu 2 Sam 24”, “*Sieben Augen auf einem Stein*” (*Sach* 3,9). Studien zur Literatur des Zweiten Tempels. Festschrift für Ina Willi-Plein zum 65. Geburtstag (eds. F. HARTENSTEIN – M. PIETSCH) (Neukirchen-Vluyn 2007) 229-234, 242-246.

Jebusite(s))”³⁰. The late author of Zechariah 9 considered the Jebusites to be members of the Judahite society, similar to the other clans of Judah³¹.

The name Araunah appears in a number of different forms in 2 Samuel 24 and is certainly non-Semitic³². However, it is impossible to establish with certainty whether (a) the author deliberately selected an archaic foreign name (in a way not dissimilar to that of the author of Genesis 14)³³; (b) Araunah was a title rather than a personal name³⁴; (c) the name “Jebusite” is a codified designation of some post-exilic population group whose ancestor or leader was named Araunah³⁵; or (d) the name reflects an old memory of a Jebusite ruler/noble who lived in the city. In light of the late date of the story, I tend to dismiss the last possibility and consider the other three potentially viable. Hence, the foreign name Araunah should not serve as key for establishing the ethnic identity of the Jebusites in the early Iron Age³⁶.

Scholars have suggested a Jebusite origin for several figures mentioned in the David and Solomon story-cycles — namely, Zadok³⁷,

³⁰ J. WELLHAUSEN, *Die Kleinen Propheten übersetzt und erklärt* (Berlin 1963) 188; W. NOWACK, *Die Kleinen Propheten übersetzt und erklärt* (HKAT; Göttingen 1903) 389. For a slightly different translation, see D. BARTHÉLEMY, *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament. Tome 3: Ézéchiel, Daniel et les 12 Prophètes* (OBO 50/3; Fribourg – Göttingen 1992) 973-974.

³¹ M.J. BODA – M.H. FLOYD, *Bringing Out the Treasure*. Inner Biblical Allusion in Zechariah 9–14 (London – New York 2004) 22.

³² For the ethnic affiliation of the name Araunah, see H.B. ROSÉN, “Arawna — nom hittite?”, *VT* 5 (1955) 318-320; M. GERHARDS, “Arauna: Zu einer möglichen Spur indoarischen Einflusses im vordavidischen Jerusalem”, *UF* 40 (2008) 345-404, with earlier literature.

³³ MATHYS, “Anmerkungen”, 242-245.

³⁴ P.K. MCCARTER, *II Samuel*. A New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary (AB 9; Garden City, NY 1984) 512. The phenomenon of foreign titles that are taken as personal names is well known. See N. NA'AMAN, “The Historical Background to the Conquest of Samaria”, *Bib* 71 (1990) 206-225, esp. 216-217, with earlier literature.

³⁵ Thanks are due to an anonymous referee of *Biblica* who offered this possible explanation.

³⁶ *Contra* GERHARDS, “Arauna”, 345-357, with earlier literature in nn. 15-31.

³⁷ H.H. ROWLEY, “Zadok and Nehushtan”, *JBL* 58 (1939) 113-141; C. HAUER, “Who was Zadok?”, *JBL* 82 (1963) 89-94; G.H. JONES, *The Nathan Narratives* (JSOTS 80; Sheffield 1990) 131-135. For a critical discussion of the theories suggested for Zadok's provenance, see A. CODY, *A History of Old Testament Priesthood* (AB 35; Rome 1969) 89-93.

Nathan ³⁸, and Uriah ³⁹. However, none of these identifications is supported by concrete evidence. Theoretically, persons who are mentioned in these story-cycles might have been of Jebusite origin, but since there is no way to corroborate this origin, we should best avoid such identifications.

The discussion of the Hittites in the court of David and the Hittite influence on the cult and culture of Jerusalem should be set apart from that of the Jebusites. We know very little of Jerusalem in the pre-monarchical and early monarchical period, and it is impossible to establish with certainty the role of Hittites in the history of the kingdom and the city ⁴⁰.

In sum, the account of David's conquest of Jerusalem supplies only few details about the Jebusites. They must have controlled the stronghold and its region and, following David's conquest, remained in the area and were gradually absorbed within the growing population of Jerusalem and the nearby region.

III. Saul's Residence at Gibeah (Tell el-Fûl)

Saul established his residence at Gibeah/Gibeah of Saul (Tell el-Fûl), about 11 kilometres north of ancient Jerusalem, and was buried in Zela (2 Sam 21,14), a place located in the Jerusalem region (see Josh 18,28). The identification of Gibeah/Gibeah of Saul at Tell el-Fûl was suggested at the dawn of biblical research ⁴¹. Fol-

³⁸ G.W. AHLSTRÖM, "Der Prophet Nathan und der Tempelbau", *VT* 11 (1961) 113-127; G. HENTSCHEL, "War Natan der Wortführer der Jebusiter?", *Ich bewirke das Heil und erschaffe das Unheil (Jesaja 45,7)*. Studien zur Botschaft der Propheten. Festschrift für Lothar Ruppert zum 65. Geburtstag (eds. F. DIETRICH – B. WILLMES) (FB 88; Würzburg 1998) 181-208, with earlier literature.

³⁹ For the origin and etymologies proposed for the name Uriah, see SINGER, "The Hittites and the Bible", 744-745, with earlier literature; M. GERHARDS, "Die biblischen 'Hethiter'", 164-167.

⁴⁰ For recent discussions on this topic, see SINGER, "The Hittites and the Bible", 723-756; GERHARDS, "Die biblischen 'Hethiter'", 145-179; NA'AMAN, "Queen Mothers", 479-490, with earlier literature.

⁴¹ E. ROBINSON, "Notes on Biblical Geography", *Bibliotheca Sacra and Theological Review* 1 (1844) 598-602.

lowing the excavations held at the site ⁴², the majority of scholars accepted its identification with Gibeah ⁴³.

However, some scholars posit that biblical Gibeah/Gibeah of Saul and Geba are alternative names of one place that is located at Jeba', in the eastern Benjamin hill country ⁴⁴. They thus dismissed the identification of the former with Tel el-Fûl. In my opinion, this suggestion is wholly erroneous, resting on (a) a misreading of the text of Isa 10,29; (b) a misrepresentation of the data of Josephus; and (c) unlikely interpretations of the biblical references to Gibeah ⁴⁵.

1. According to Isa 10,29 ("They crossed through the ravine; 'Geba' is our lodge for the night"; Ramah trembled, Gibeah of Saul has fled"), Geba and Gibeah of Saul were two different places on the road leading from the north to Jerusalem.

2. The confusion of Gibeah and Geba in Judges 19–20 results from the late expansions inserted into the story, but the original story in chapter 19 identified Gibeah at Tell el-Fûl. This identification is suggested by the account of the march from Bethlehem to Gibeah. The Levite proceeded from Bethlehem around the evening (v. 9), arrived near Jerusalem (Jebus) when the day was mostly gone (v. 11), and when the sun went down arrived at Gibeah (v. 14). Jeba' is located far off from Jerusalem; only the nearby Tell el-Fûl fits the account's time-table.

3. In his account of Titus' march toward Jerusalem, Josephus (*Wars*, V 50–51) relates that the Roman army proceeded from Samaria and spent the night at Gophna (Jifnâ). After a second day's march, the army camped at a place called "the Valley of Thorns", near Gabath-Saul, about 30 stadia from Jerusalem. Clearly, the Roman army proceeded along the central highland's main road that

⁴² For the excavations of the site, see W.F. ALBRIGHT, *Excavation and Results at Tell el-Fûl (Gibeah of Saul)* (AASOR 4; New Haven, CT 1924); L.A. SINCLAIR, "An Archaeological Study of Gibeah (Tell el-Ful)", *AASOR* 34–35 (1960) 1–52; P.W. LAPP, "Tell el-Fûl", *BA* 28 (1965) 2–10; N.L. LAPP, "Fûl, Tell el-", *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, vol. 2 (ed. E. STERN) (Jerusalem 1993) 445–448, with earlier literature.

⁴³ See recently, H. HARRIS, "Albright's Identification of Gibeah with Tell el-Ful", *PEQ* 146 (2014) 17–30, with earlier literature.

⁴⁴ J.M. MILLER, "Geba/Gibeah of Benjamin", *VT* 25 (1979) 145–166; P.M. ARNOLD, *Gibeah: The Search for a Biblical City* (JSOTS 79; Sheffield 1990); I. FINKELSTEIN, "Tell el-Ful Revisited: The Assyrian and Hellenistic Periods (with a New Identification)", *PEQ* 143 (2011) 106–118.

⁴⁵ For detailed criticism, see HARRIS, "Albright's Identification", 17–30.

led to Jerusalem and did not turn east toward Jeba'. Josephus supports the identification of Gabath-Saul with Tell el-Fûl with two other pieces of evidence. (a) In *Antiquities* (VIII 303), he relates that Ramah was distanced 40 stadia from Jerusalem. Since Jeba' is farther from Jerusalem than Ramah is, the statement that Gabath-Saul is located 30 stadia from Jerusalem cannot refer to Jeba' ⁴⁶. (b) In his description of the Outrage of Gibeah, Josephus (*Antiquities* V 139-140) relates that the Levite, after arriving near Jerusalem, decided to proceed a distance of 20 stadia and lodge in an Israelite town, that is, Gibeah. Evidently, in his two works, Josephus recorded approximate measures — 30 and 20 stadia — for the distance between Jerusalem and Gibeah/Gabath-Saul. An average span of about 25 stadia corresponds exactly with the distance from Jerusalem to Tell el-Fûl, but certainly not to far-off Jeba' ⁴⁷.

4. In Jerome's description of Paula's pilgrimage to Jerusalem, he relates that she passed Aijalon and Gibeon, stopped briefly at "Gabaa" and proceeded to Jerusalem while passing near the mausoleum of Helena. Even scholars who identified Gibeah at Jeba' admit that Jerome's Gabaa refers to Tell el-Fûl ⁴⁸. This identification is also applied to the other sites named Gabaa that Jerome mentions in his commentaries on Hos 5,8 and Zeph 1,15-16 ⁴⁹.

5. The confusion in identification of Geba' and Gibeah is mainly confined to the episode of Saul's war with the Philistines (1 Samuel 13-14), which is beyond the scope of this article. In all other references within the story-cycle of Saul, the place is called either Gibeah of Saul (1 Sam 11,4; 15,34) or Gibeah (1 Sam 10,26; 22,6; 23,19; 26,1) and refers to Saul's place of birth and his residence as king. Its identification with Tell el-Fûl is self-evident ⁵⁰.

⁴⁶ ROBINSON ("Notes", 600) has already suggested this proposition.

⁴⁷ ROBINSON, "Notes", 600-601. For further discussion, see C. MÖLLER – G. SCHMITT, *Siedlungen Palästinas nach Flavius Josephus* (BTAVO, Reihe B [Geisteswissenschaften] Nr. 14; Wiesbaden 1976) 55, with earlier literature; E. REGEV, "Josephus on Gibeah: Versions of a Toponym", *JQR* 89 (1999) 352-353.

⁴⁸ MILLER, "Geba/Gibeah", 162.

⁴⁹ For references, see Y. TSAFRIR – L. DI SEGNI – J. GREEN, *Tabula Imperii Romani — Maps and Gazetteer: Eretz Israel in the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Periods* (Jerusalem 1994) 126a.

⁵⁰ The location of Gibeath Elohim (1 Sam 10,5.10) is not clear and depends on the authenticity of the LXX of v. 13 (MT "he came to the high place [בְּמִזְבֵּחַ]; LXX "to Gibeah"). I therefore exclude it from the discussion.

Finkelstein recently analyzed the results of the excavations at Tell el-Fûl ⁵¹. He dated the early stratum to the Iron I and the first part of the Iron IIA period. The accumulation of debris in the site is minimal, and the fortresses of the late Iron II and Hellenistic periods destroyed all the building remains of the Iron I-early Iron IIA. Finkelstein thus maintained that no building remains in the residential part of the site can securely be associated with the site's early period. Moreover, most of the floors of the Iron Age buildings were removed, and no two superimposed floors with assemblages of finds were discovered at the site ⁵². Thus, the archaeological excavations demonstrate that Tell el-Fûl was inhabited in the 11th-10th centuries, but on the basis of the archaeological evidence alone it is impossible to establish its nature in this period.

IV. The Jebusites under King Saul

Gibeah, Saul's residence, was located about 11 kilometres north of Jerusalem, and yet the latter city and its Jebusite inhabitants are not mentioned in the king's history. Their absence from Saul's story-cycle cannot be accidental and must be explained as a deliberate decision of the author. This situation raises two questions: (a) What were the historiographical and ideological reasons for the omission? (b) What might have been Saul's relations with the neighbouring place and its Jebusite inhabitants?

Saul's history does not supply answers to these questions. Yet, indirect evidence exists that might possibly provide us with a clue regarding the relations. One of the most surprising elements in Saul's history is the request of the delegates of Jabesh-gilead to come to their aid and his willingness to mobilize his troops and defend the remote city (1 Sam 11,1-11). Jabesh (Tell el-Maqlûb) ⁵³ is located in western Gilead, about 75 kilometres northeast of Gibeah, and yet Benjaminite troops rather than troops of nearby clans or

⁵¹ FINKELSTEIN, "Tell el-Ful Revisited", 106-114.

⁵² FINKELSTEIN, "Tell el-Ful Revisited", 109-110.

⁵³ For the identification of Jabesh-gilead at Tell el-Maqlûb, see M. NOTH, "Jabes-Gilead", *ZDPV* 69 (1953) 28-41; E. GASS, *Die Ortsnamen des Richterbuchs in historischer und redaktioneller Perspektive* (ADPV 35; Wiesbaden 2005) 504-509, with earlier literature.

tribes were willing to come to its aid. No reasonable explanation has been offered so far for Saul's campaign to the city of Jabesh and for the willingness of the Jabeshites to risk their lives and carry the bodies of the king and his sons from Beth-shean to Jabesh (1 Sam 31,12-13). I put forward the hypotheses that (a) the Jebusites and Jabeshites were two segments of a pastoral clan that settled in the early Iron Age in the two remote regions; and (b) that the Jebusites were the southernmost of the clans that formed the gradually growing tribe of Benjamin. The latter hypothesis contrasts the recently suggested theory that the tribe of Benjamin settled as an organized tribal unit and developed as a separate entity, independent of the other highland clans and tribes ⁵⁴.

Among the Amorite personal names attested in cuneiform tablets of the early second millennium BCE, several names are derived from the verb YBŠ, "to be dry". Some of the names are written with /s/ (Yabusum, Yabasi-Dagan) and others with /š/ (Yabišum, Yabušum, Mebišum). The alternative rendering of the third sibilant radical clearly reflect the proto-Semitic /š/ ⁵⁵. Scholars have further noted the resemblance of the name Jebusite to the clan name Yabisa/Yabasa/Yabusu in the Mari documents ⁵⁶.

In this context, it is worth noting that already Forrer suggested that "the Amorite father was the Amorite tribe Jebus, which we know from very early times, since its name occurs as that of the city of Jabušum on the north-west frontier of Babylonia, mentioned by Šamšu-ilu-a [...]. It is impossible to determine whether Jabušum on the Euphrates and Jebus (Jerusalem) were founded by parts of the same Amorite tribe, or whether the Jabuše-Amorites were driven out from Mesopotamia and settled in Jerusalem or the reverse" ⁵⁷.

⁵⁴ See D. FLEMING, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible*. History, Politics, and the Reinscribing of Tradition (Cambridge 2012) 144-161.

⁵⁵ GELB, *Computer-Aided Analysis*, 21, 600, Nos 3159-3160, 3163-3165; cf. H.B. HUFFMON, *Amorite Personal Names in the Mari Texts*. A Structural and Lexical Study (Baltimore, MD 1965) 177; ABRAHAMI, "Yabisa".

⁵⁶ HUFFMON, *Amorite Personal Names*, 177; H.Y. PRIEBATSCH, "Jerusalem und die Brunnenstrasse Merneptahs", *ZDPV* 91 (1975) 19; ID., "Die amoritische Sprache Palästinas in ihren Beziehungen zu Mari und Syrien", *UF* 9 (1977) 252, 254.

⁵⁷ E. FORRER, "The Hittites in Palestine, I", *PEFQst* 68 (1936) 199.

In any case, it is evident that both “Jabesh” and “Jebusite” were names derived from the verb YBŠ, “to be dry” — each transcribing the proto-Semitic /š/ by a different sibilant⁵⁸. In this light, I suggest that the Jabeshites and Jebusites were originally part of a single clan that wandered in a region where the rainfall was minimal; hence the derivation of their name from a verb meaning “dry”. Over the course of the early Iron Age, they split and settled, one group in the Jerusalem region and the other in the area of Wādi Yābis in western Gilead. The Jabeshites gave their name to the new settlement they founded, whereas the ancient name of Jerusalem was too deeply rooted to be altered, and thus remained as it was. Priebatsch observed the synonymy of the names Jebusites and Zion (*ṣiyôn*), as the latter was derived from the verb ṢYY, “to be dry”⁵⁹. In this light, we may suggest that the new settlers in Jerusalem named the stronghold they constructed as a synonym for their clan’s name.

In spite of the territorial distance, the two segments of the clan must have continued to hold close ties. Military cooperation was one of the strongest elements in tribal solidarity, and the story of the delegation the Jabeshites sent to Saul and of the latter’s campaign to rescue the city of Jabesh fits the tribal reality well. Note also the marriage of Merab, Saul’s daughter, to Adriel of Meholah (1 Sam 18,19; 2 Sam 21,8), a city located not far from Jabesh⁶⁰, which might possibly have been a marriage of the king’s daughter to the son of one of the northern clan’s leaders.

V. The Jebusites’ Denigration in Biblical Historiography

The hypothesis that the Jebusites were a Benjaminite clan and maintained close contacts with the new king and his house, if accepted, sheds new light on the historicity of the episode of David’s conquest of the stronghold of Zion and on the way it is related in bib-

⁵⁸ HÜBNER, “Jerusalem und die Jebusiter”, 32, and GASS, *Die Ortsnamen*, 11, with earlier literature in notes 17-18, 504, already suggested the derivation of the name “Jebusite” from the verb YBŠ.

⁵⁹ PRIEBATSCH, “Jerusalem”, 19; ID., “Die amoritische Sprache”, 252. For a detailed analysis of the name “Zion”, see E. OTTO, “יִצְיֹן, *ṣiyôn*”, *TDOT* XII, 342-343, with earlier literature.

⁶⁰ For the location of Abel-meholah, see GASS, *Die Ortsnamen*, 287-293, with earlier literature.

lical historiography. The stronghold was located on the southern border of the tribe of Benjamin and must have been one of Saul's bases of power. No wonder that in the descriptions of the tribal allotments the city is included in Benjamin's inheritance (Josh 15,8a; 18,16b.28). Thus, its conquest represents neither the removal of the non-Israelite barrier that cut the connection between the southern and northern Israelite tribes, nor the transformation of the conquered non-Israelite city into a personal property of the conqueror⁶¹. On the contrary, the place was conquered from its Jebusite/Benjaminite inhabitants and was motivated by David's efforts to take over one of the power bases of the Saulides, his rivals. Following his conquest, David established his seat in the conquered city and from his new residence was able to control the neighbouring territory of Benjamin. No wonder that after the division of the monarchy, the district of Benjamin was included in the kingdom of Judah and remained Judahite until the kingdom's destruction in 587/86 BCE⁶².

Evidently, the chronicle-like account of Jerusalem's conquest (2 Sam 5,6-8) is biased in one major element. It concealed the fact that David captured a Saulide stronghold and made the false impression that, formerly, a pre-Israelite ethnic group held it. By presenting the conquest in this manner the author gave it an aura of heroic feat and legitimacy. The real objects of the conquest — namely, to take over a strategic base of the Saulides and control the neighbouring territory of Benjamin — are intentionally omitted from the account.

The representation of the Jebusites in the history of David deeply influenced their depiction in later biblical historiography. The most remarkable expression of this representation is in the list of six or seven pre-Israelite nations that the Israelites subjugated. The list mainly appears in Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic texts, and authors of this ideological movement frequently used it whenever they

⁶¹ These were the theses of A. ALT in several influential publications; see "Jerusalems Aufstieg", *Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, vol. III (München 1959) 243-257; ID., "Die Staatenbildung der Israeliten in Palästina", *Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, vol. II (München 1953) 33-65; ID., "Das Königtum in den Reichen Israel und Juda", *VT* 1 (1951) 2-22.

⁶² N. NA'AMAN, "Saul, Benjamin and the Emergence of 'Biblical Israel'", *ZAW* 121 (2009) 338-342, with earlier literature.

sought to describe the reality in the Land of Canaan before it was conquered by the Israelites. It seems that in the time of the Deuteronomistic movement, the memory of the ancient reality was vague, and the late authors accepted the history of David at "face value" and concluded that the Jebusites were a pre-Israelite ethnic group, similar to the other groups included in the list they formed.

The post-exilic author of the story of the Outrage of Gibeah (Judges 19–20) was influenced by the way the Jebusites were depicted in the history of David and their inclusion in the list of six or seven non-Israelite ethnic groups, but went one step beyond the conventional Deuteronomistic description. He explicitly described Jebus as a foreign, non-Israelite town where Israelites should avoid lodging even for a night (Judg 19,11-12). His designation of Jerusalem by the name Jebus and his reference to the Jebusites as a foreign, non-Israelite ethnic group indicate how little this late author understood the reality of the early history of Israel.

Contrary to these authors, the prophet Ezekiel was born to a priestly Jerusalemite family and was probably aware of the Benjaminite descent of the Jebusites. So when he emphasized the non-Yahwistic origin of the cult of Jerusalem he attributed it to the city's Amorite "father" and Hittite "mother" (Ezek 16,3.45).

In sum, the Jebusites were a West Semitic pastoral clan that in the course of the early Iron Age split into two segments, one settling in western Gilead and the other in the area of Jerusalem. Despite the split, the two segments kept their tribal solidarity and cooperated whenever military support was required. The Jebusites and their stronghold in Jerusalem were an important, nuclear component of the Kingdom of Saul. With David's rise to power, the Jebusite stronghold was conquered and established as the conqueror's capital. The author of David's history related the conquest in a biased manner, and his description deeply influenced the way the Jebusites were presented in late biblical historiography and maintained in the Israelite cultural memory. Historically, the Jebusites were probably absorbed within the tribe of Benjamin, and their later history is inseparable from that of the tribe and the neighbouring city of Jerusalem.

SUMMARY

This article re-examines the historical role of the Jebusites in the early monarchical period. The Jebusites, whose name is derived from the verb YBŚ (“to be dry”), were a West Semitic pastoral clan that split into two segments, one settling in western Gilead and the other around Jerusalem. The two segments kept their tribal solidarity, as indicated by Saul’s campaign to rescue Jabesh-gilead. The Jebusite stronghold was one of Saul’s power bases, and David took it over. The biased description of David’s conquest influenced the way the Jebusites were presented in the late (Deuteronomistic) biblical historiography and in Israelite cultural memory.

The Division of Israel's Kingdom in Chronicles: A Re-examination of the Usual Suspects ¹

I. *Status Quaestionis*

The past generation of scholars has done much research to articulate the distinct ideologies located within the Chronicler's history. This took a major step forward with the work of Japhet and Williamson, who persuaded many to study the books of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah as separate works with different authors ². In this vein, Japhet wrote her seminal work delineating several aspects of the Chronicler's own particular ideology (e.g. retribution), while Williamson demonstrated that the Chronicler had a much more favorable view toward the northern kingdom than the view evinced by Ezra-Nehemiah ³. Moreover, since that time, numerous monographs have surfaced to elucidate further the Chronicler's understanding of these and similar topics ⁴, while several other works have examined his methodology as historian, author, or theologian ⁵.

Another type of investigation into the Chronicler's method comes from Knoppers, who explores how the Chronicler reformulates the latter half of David's reign in light of his understanding of

¹ I wish to thank my supervisor H.G.M. Williamson for his insightful comments in the preparation of this paper. Any errors that remain are my own.

² S. JAPHET, "Supposed Common Authorship of Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah Investigated Anew", *VT* 18 (1968) 330-371; H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, *Israel in the Books of Chronicles* (Cambridge 1977) 5-82.

³ S. JAPHET, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought* (BEATAJ 9; Frankfurt am Main 1989) 87-140.

⁴ E.g. B.E. KELLY, *Retribution and Eschatology in Chronicles* (JSOTSS 211; Sheffield 1996); W. RILEY, *King and Cultus in Chronicles*. Worship and the Reinterpretation of History (JSOTSS 160; Sheffield 1993).

⁵ M.P. GRAHAM – K.G. HOGLUND – S.L. MCKENZIE (eds.), *The Chronicler as Historian* (JSOTSS 238; Sheffield 1997); M.P. GRAHAM – S.L. MCKENZIE (eds.), *The Chronicler as Author*. Studies in Text and Texture (JSOTSS 263; Sheffield 1999); M.P. GRAHAM – S.L. MCKENZIE – G.N. KNOPPERS (eds.), *The Chronicler as Theologian*. Essays in Honor of Ralph W. Klein (JSOTSS 371; London 2003).

the dynastic oracle ⁶. According to Knoppers, the account of David's reign in 2 Samuel would have left many hermeneutical, historical, and social issues for the Chronicler to resolve for the post-exilic community of Yehud ⁷. Thus, using the dynastic oracle as his starting point, Knoppers argues that the Chronicler "changes history" to address these inconsistencies. In other words, even though the Chronicler works with well-established landmarks of Israel's storied past, he clearly does not have any problem with modifying them to a great extent to suit his own purposes. Beyond this, exegetes have eagerly sought out other critical places where the Chronicler has made the most shocking changes in history.

However, the record of Israel's split into two different kingdoms (and the assignment of blame) represents an area that requires more caution. At one time, von Rad represented the view of many that immediately after the northern secession the true Israel resided in Judah and Benjamin (2 Chr 11,3) ⁸. Against this view, Williamson made several arguments that the Chronicler did not criticize the northern tribes in their departure, but that they had left for good reasons, much like the account in 1 Kings ⁹. As support, he pointed out how the Chronicler retained two statements that asserted God's execution of the division (2 Chr 10,15; 11,4 // 1 Kgs 12,15.24), which he avers could not be accidental due to the Chronicler's stress up to this point on the unity of Israel ¹⁰. He adds that the Chronicler considered the northerners rebellious only after they in-

⁶ G.N. KNOPPERS, "Changing History: Nathan's Oracle and the Structure of the Davidic Monarchy in Chronicles", *Shai le-Sara Japhet*. Studies in the Bible, Its Exegesis, and Its Language (eds. M. BAR-ASHER – D. ROM-SHILONI – E. TOV – N. WAZANA) (Jerusalem 2007) 99-123.

⁷ Most scholars agree that the Chronicler used some form of Samuel-Kings as his main source; cf. R.K. DUKE, "Recent Research in Chronicles", *CBR* 8 (2009) 10-50, here 23-25. A.G. AULD, *Kings Without Privilege*. David and Moses in the Story of the Bible's Kings (Edinburgh 1994), has disagreed with this near consensus and argued at length that the authors of Samuel-Kings and Chronicles shared a common source that is now lost.

⁸ Cf. G. VON RAD, *Das Geschichtsbild des chronistischen Werkes* (Stuttgart 1930) 30-31. See also W. RUDOLPH, *Chronikbücher* (HAT 21; Tübingen 1955) 227.

⁹ WILLIAMSON, *Israel in Chronicles*, 110-14, following A.C. WELCH, *Post-exilic Judaism* (Edinburgh 1935) 189-191.

¹⁰ Cf. 1 Chr 29,20-26 (4x); 2 Chr 1,2 (2x); 7,6.8; 9,30.

stalled a false cult (2 Chr 11,14-15) and a new, faithful Davidide had become king in Judah (i.e. Abijah).

Two recent scholars in particular have argued against such an interpretation. First, Knoppers contends that the Chronicler's idealization of Solomon's reign not only absolves him from the blame he received in 1 Kgs 11,1-13, but it also removes the legitimacy of Jeroboam's pursuit of a separate kingship later on (cf. 1 Kgs 11,29-39)¹¹. With Jeroboam as the true culprit, Knoppers also minimizes the blame attributed to Rehoboam as much as possible, pronouncing him more of a victim than a villain in the process. Second, Japhet goes further to say that the Israelites' plea for a lighter workload now has no basis since the Chronicler has "systematically suppressed" any evidence that Solomon had ever subjected his people to slave labor¹². She too removes much of the blame from Rehoboam while placing it on Jeroboam and the people for the secession.

These scholars have done well to examine the broader context for questions surrounding Israel's split. Since the account in 1 Kings places a large portion of the blame on Solomon, it makes sense to take into serious consideration what the Chronicler writes about him. However, this particular interpretation assumes that the Chronicler adapts the reign of Solomon with the intent to exonerate him from the division of the kingdom, a claim that must be challenged. Nevertheless, even before assessing Solomon's actions, we must first examine the Chronicler's rendering of the actual split itself in 2 Chr 10,1-11,4 (// 1 Kgs 12,1-24). Many scholars have passed over this critical piece of evidence too quickly, deeming the Chronicler's account inconsistent and incomprehensible in light of his idealization of Solomon¹³, but I will

¹¹ G.N. KNOPPERS, "Rehoboam in Chronicles: Villain or Victim?", *JBL* 109 (1990) 423-440, here 425-432.

¹² S. JAPHET, *I & II Chronicles*. A Commentary (OTL; London 1993) 653. See also R.W. KLEIN, *2 Chronicles*. A Commentary (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN 2012) 158.

¹³ Cf. E. BEN ZVI, "The Secession of the Northern Kingdom in Chronicles: Accepted 'Facts' and New Meanings", *History, Literature and Theology in the Books of Chronicles* (London 2006) 117-143. Note the aporetic subtitles in this chapter, "The Prominence of the Seemingly Unexplainable in the (Hi)story of the Secession in Chronicles" and "Explaining the Seemingly Unexplainable and Imagining the Deity". See also S.J. DE VRIES, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (FOTL 11; Grand Rapids, MI 1989) 278; JAPHET, *I & II Chronicles*, 653; KLEIN, *2 Chronicles*, 153.

argue below that the Chronicler has made sufficient changes for a coherent story, one that maintains and even intensifies the blame put on Rehoboam in 1 Kings for his actions. With this central text understood, an analysis of other pertinent texts will further illuminate the Chronicler's view on the matter, texts such as Solomon's reign (2 Chronicles 1–9) and Abijah's speech (13,4–12). We may now re-examine the usual suspects.

II. Rehoboam at the Shechem Council

Since the Chronicler first broaches the topic of Israel's split into two separate kingdoms at the beginning of Rehoboam's reign in 2 Chr 10,1–11,4, a passage the Chronicler borrows with very few changes from his *Vorlage* in 1 Kgs 12,1–24, we may look at him as our first suspect. In both texts, a group of Israelites confronts the new king Rehoboam about the "heavy yoke" levied upon them by his father Solomon (v. 4). As the story goes, Rehoboam forgoes the wise counsel of the elders and shuns the people, a move which leads to the secession of the northern tribes.

1. *The Chronicler's creative use of "all Israel"*

By far the most important of the Chronicler's changes concerns his use of the phrase "all Israel" (כל־יִשְׂרָאֵל) at several points (2 Chr 10,1.3.16 [2x]; 11,3). Of these five occurrences, the Chronicler has borrowed the phrase from 1 Kings 12 in two instances (10,1.16) and modified the text in the other three (10,3.16; 11,3). His removal of the term in another verse (1 Kgs 12,18 // 2 Chr 10,18)¹⁴, combined with the retention of a different phrase for the people (e.g. "the people of Israel" in 10,17.18) and the specification of all Israel in another place (cf. 11,3, "all Israel in Judah and Benjamin"), reveal that he does not use this term haphazardly¹⁵. Rather, the Chronicler integrates it into the narrative here as the continuation

¹⁴ He also removes two occurrences in 12,20, but seemingly for other reasons that do not concern the term itself.

¹⁵ That is to say, he does not use the phrase everywhere, and so it likely has a different connotation than "the people of Israel".

of a theme he has developed consistently throughout the united monarchy and even began as early as the genealogies ¹⁶. In addition to the general hyperbolic sense the phrase carries in other parts of the Hebrew Bible (e.g. Josh 3,7.17; 4,14; etc.), the Chronicler has attributed to it three particular nuances that impact its meaning in 2 Chr 10,1 – 11,4.

First of all, the Chronicler presents the gathering of all Israel to the worship of YHWH as the ultimate goal for the nation. In the opening genealogies the Chronicler shows how Israel's God elected them from among all the peoples of the earth (1 Chronicles 1) and blessed the individual tribes with numerous descendants and a place in the land (1 Chronicles 2–8). But then, immediately following, he concludes the genealogies with a section that expresses the hope that this “all Israel” would once again repopulate the land even after the exile (1 Chronicles 9, cf. v. 1) ¹⁷. After he sets this as the target for the contemporary community in post-exilic Yehud, he then also projects it back to Israel's kings. Accordingly, the Chronicler portrays David as the pioneer in this endeavor who held it as his main objective throughout 1 Chronicles 11–16. The first two of these chapters offer a flashback to show how he won the support of Israelites from his early days of hiding in the stronghold (cf. 12,17–19) ¹⁸. This group, which eventually grew to become all Israel (12,38), would then crown him king (11,1–3) and help him conquer Jerusalem as his new capital (11,4–9).

¹⁶ Quite surprisingly, I have found no scholar who has closely investigated this theme as it pertains to 2 Chr 10,1 – 11,4, and only JAPHET has given much attention to the phrase theologically in the books of Chronicles as a whole; cf. JAPHET, *Ideology*, 267–277 (though of course, for the different uses of Israel in Chronicles, see WILLIAMSON, *Israel in Chronicles*, 87–140).

¹⁷ Certainly the clause “So all Israel was recorded in genealogies [...]” in 9,1 summarizes and even idealizes all the data before it (1 Chronicles 1–8), yet it also evokes the sense that this hope, encapsulated by the Chronicler's favorite moniker for the united people used for the first time here, will come to fruition once again.

¹⁸ On the use of a flashback here, cf. JAPHET, *I & II Chronicles*, 233. For David's growing support before his reign in 1 Chronicles 11–12, cf. G.N. KNOPPERS, “Israel's First King and ‘The Kingdom of YHWH in the Hands of the Sons of David’: The Place of the Saulide Monarchy in the Chronicler's Historiography”, *Saul in Story and Tradition* (eds. C.S. EHRLICH – M. WHITE) (FAT 47; Tübingen 2006) 187–213, here 193–200.

The following so-called ark narrative tells how David sought to gather still more Israelites (i.e. an even more robust “all Israel”) from the frontiers of the land to rally them around the ark, Israel’s most sacred relic of the time (13,1-5). This larger group helped him transfer the ark to Jerusalem (15,3.28) and also participated in an exuberant celebration at the end (1 Chronicles 16, cf. vv. 3.36b). Thus, David championed this cause as he effectively brought all Israel together to worship their ancestral God YHWH. Moreover, the Chronicler also maintains that David preserved this solidarity among the people until the end of his reign (29,26). This central facet to Israel’s religious atmosphere proves as integral to Solomon’s establishment of the temple cult as the provision of materials for construction (cf. 2 Chr 1,2; 7,6.8). Long after the division of the kingdom, the Chronicler would revisit this theme once again in the reign of King Hezekiah, who not only reopened the temple but also sought to regather all Israel for worship there (cf. 2 Chr 30,1-9).

As a second nuance, the Chronicler puts forward the support of all Israel as a reward to faithful kings ¹⁹. Looking again at the example of David, we see that he garnered the people’s support on account of his faithfulness to YHWH. At an early point in his career, his declaration that YHWH would vindicate him if an oncoming mob betrayed him demonstrates his faith (12,18), while Amasai’s response reveals that they joined with David “because your God helps you” (v. 19) ²⁰. In the same vein, his desire to retrieve the ark merited even greater support from the people (again, 13,1-5). While David’s sinful command to take a census resulted in the fragmentation of all Israel (cf. 21,4-6) ²¹, his renewed focus on the temple with extensive preparations (1 Chronicles 22–29) once again unified all Israel just before the transfer of the kingship

¹⁹ Divine retribution and blessing have received much attention in Chronicles scholarship. Cf. KELLY, *Retribution and Eschatology*, 29–110. See also the cautionary notes of E. BEN ZVI, “The Book of Chronicles: Another Look”, *SR* 31 (2002) 261–281, here 263–267.

²⁰ For the Chronicler’s distinctive use of the word עֵזֶר (“help”), see H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, “‘We Are Yours, O David’: The Setting and Purpose of 1 Chronicles 12:1–23”, *Studies in Persian Period History and Historiography* (FAT 38; Tübingen 2004) 115–125, here 116–118.

²¹ Cf. K. RISTAU, “Breaking Down Unity: An Analysis of 1 Chronicles 21:1 – 22:1”, *JSOT* 30 (2005) 201–221.

to Solomon (29,23-26). The Chronicler also marks the faithfulness of Solomon in completing the temple project with the presence of all Israel at the dedication ceremony (2 Chr 7,6.8). To give one final example, we may note the appearance of all Israel near the end of Hezekiah's reforms in 2 Chr 31,1. The Chronicler had just detailed all the work that Hezekiah had accomplished in re-establishing the temple and its cult in the religious life of Israel (2 Chronicles 29-30), and so the support of the people follows naturally afterward as the expected reward. Not only does this occurrence follow along the model of David and Solomon, but it also reverses the circumstances created by Ahaz whose idolatrous actions led to "the ruin of all Israel" (2 Chr 28,23).

A third nuance for the Chronicler's use of the phrase all Israel can be derived from the first two. If the above survey shows that (1) good kings seek to rally the entire nation to YHWH by their faithfulness and (2) they consequently receive the people's unwavering support for such devotion, then (3) we can expect all Israel to behave in a faithful, trustworthy manner whenever they act together. While the people will often react against an unfaithful king (e.g. 2 Chr 21,19-20; 24,25) and such a wicked king could lead them astray (2 Chr 36,11-16), the Chronicler nevertheless shows throughout his narrative that they will always support a king who acts faithfully. Moreover, he will never show them to instigate a turbulent period since they will always follow and even comply with a good king ²².

2. *The legitimate claim of "all Israel" at Shechem*

In this light, Japhet's charge that the people made their request for a lighter workload only as an excuse for rebellion has little basis. To begin with, the Chronicler certainly describes this group of people within his predominant theme of all Israel since the term appears twice at the beginning of the episode (10,1.3). While he takes the first as a direct borrowing from 1 Kgs 12,1, he must change the second from the phrase "all the assembly of Israel" in v. 3 to keep his theme consistent. The same use of this phrase a mere two verses

²² Jotham may appear as an exception, but really Uzziah deserved the blame for their corrupt practices (חחש, v. 2; cf. 2 Chr 26,16). Moreover, the Chronicler never shows them acting against Jotham but insinuates that they simply kept idolatrous ways.

earlier at the end of Solomon's reign (9,30) also makes this meaning clear. The Chronicler uses the phrase "all Israel" with specific reference to just the northern kingdom in Abijah's speech later (cf. 13,4), but this becomes obvious only because the kingdom was divided by that point (see comments below on 2 Chr 10,17-19 and 11,3). So even though the group at Shechem likely represents disgruntled delegates from the northern tribes in 1 Kings 12, the Chronicler avers that the group embodies all the people.

Further to the point, the rest of the episode makes absolutely no sense unless all Israel made a legitimate claim. First of all, Rehoboam certainly would not have given consideration to a false accusation, especially if it represented only a small number of people (as Japhet supposes) and the majority were on his side (v. 5)²³. Second, at no point did he deny the harsh conditions set by Solomon, yet the older (i.e. wiser) counsel confirmed that the good thing for him to do would be to please the people (v. 7)²⁴. Third, instead of making any attempt to appease the people, he incited them to anger by promising even more oppressive measures than his father (v. 11). Lastly, after the northerners had completely cut their ties to the south, Rehoboam still made one final attempt to carry out his plan by sending Hadoram, the taskmaster over the forced labor (v. 18). Hence, even if the people's claim were illegitimate, this would effectually make Rehoboam worse since he would now be the initiator of oppressive reforms. Rather than call all these features inconsistencies, it seems easier to say that the Chronicler attributes to the people a legitimate claim, as does the text in 1 Kings 12²⁵.

²³ Japhet refers to them as a small group in light of 2 Chr 13,7; see below. Of course, if on the other hand the group represented the majority, a sense the phrase "all Israel" seems to imply, then it is even less likely that a large group would act together in a lie.

²⁴ Interestingly, the Chronicler's retention of the word עִזָּב (vv. 8,13; "he abandoned the counsel of the old men") places Rehoboam squarely into one of his dominant themes for unfaithful kings. See later at 2 Chr 12,1.5.

²⁵ The Chronicler's retention of Shechem in 10,1 as the meeting place does not have the same effect as in 1 Kgs 12,1, since he gives no hint that dissension might have existed among any of the tribes before this point.

3. *Divine sanction of "all Israel's" entreaty*

An even more significant item the Chronicler should have removed appears in the remarks of divine determinism (10,15; 11,4). Williamson cited these verses as evidence that the northerners likely had good reason for their separation from Judah since, consonant with the evidence presented above, this event runs contrary to the "all Israel" theme the Chronicler painstakingly establishes before it²⁶. Beyond this, the Chronicler makes adaptations to these texts so that they continue to develop his theme of all Israel.

He binds the first (10,15) to the verse after it by removing the verb ראה and thus attaches the conjunction *waw* directly to כל-ישראל (10,16; cf. 1 Kgs 12,15-16)²⁷. With this change, Ahijah no longer commands YHWH's prophetic word to only Jeroboam but also to all Israel (cf. 1 Kgs 11,29-39). To this may be added that, by removing ראה from the sentence, the Chronicler has also changed the כי clause after it ("the king did not listen to them") so that it no longer gives the content of what all Israel saw but the reason for the ensuing conflict: "Because (כי) the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king [...] and all Israel went to their tents" (v. 16). In other words, rather than merely narrate the unfortunate course of events, the Chronicler explicitly makes the fall-out a result of Rehoboam's foolish decision. This last use of all Israel to denote the unified, idealized people concludes and brings cohesion to the literary unit 10,1-16, wherein Jeroboam and all Israel present the word of YHWH to Rehoboam (v. 3), but the latter foolishly squanders his dominion over them by rejecting this prophetic word (vv. 15-16a)²⁸. This second reference to the prophecy of Ahijah (see also 9,29), carefully crafted by the Chronicler to suit his purposes,

²⁶ WILLIAMSON, *Israel in Chronicles*, 110-114.

²⁷ Cf. WILLIAMSON, *Israel in Chronicles*, 108. Followed by KLEIN, 2 *Chronicles*, 152. Though *BHS* lists witnesses (e.g. Mss, Syr, Tg, VL) that show no change from 1 Kgs 12,16, LXX reads the same as MT for 2 Chr 10,16. Also, while one might expect the insertion of another preposition אל before כל-ישראל, several cases exist where the preposition is not repeated ("preposition override"); cf. B.K. WALTKE – M.P. O'CONNOR, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN 1990) 222-223.

²⁸ In this light, the Chronicler has patterned Rehoboam after Saul (cf. 1 Chr 10,13-14).

both legitimizes the claim of all Israel and consequently condemns Rehoboam for his faithlessness.

Japhet claims that this final occurrence of "all Israel" in v. 16 undoubtedly refers to the northern tribes since she sees them as the referent in vv. 1.3, and in the other references to Israel in v. 16²⁹. Williamson likewise appeals to common sense for this deduction, though he avers that the references in vv. 1 and 3 are to all the tribes based on the analogy of its previous occurrences in the reigns of David and Solomon and the omission of any hint of the division of the kingdom³⁰. While I concur with these latter arguments of Williamson, I still take his argument further that all Israel in v. 16 must be regarded in the same way as in vv. 1 and 3 based on the tight *inclusio* it forms. The addition of "all" in v. 16 and the removal of "all" in v. 18 further supports the view that this structure is the thought of the Chronicler. McKenzie argues that the southern kingdom could not be displeased with Rehoboam's actions in v. 16 so that it must refer to only the northern tribes³¹, but this fails to take into account the Chronicler's distinct use of the phrase "all Israel". Verse 16 does not suggest that "all Israel" deserted Rehoboam, but that the faithful followers of David and Solomon disapproved of his actions in this instance.

The second note of divine determinism comes after two futile attempts by Rehoboam to regain his rule over all Israel in 10,17-19 and 11,1-4. For the former, the Chronicler changes the now obsolete moniker "all Israel" of v. 18 to read "the children of Israel". This allows him to juxtapose the "the children of Israel" in the south, over whom Rehoboam reigned (v. 17), and the "the children of Israel" in the north, who rejected his authority by stoning his emissary Hadoram (v. 18); thus, the idealized "all Israel" has formally been cut into two pieces. The Chronicler then makes another statement about "all Israel" in Rehoboam's second effort to restore the north to his dominion (11,1-4). After fleeing to Jerusalem from the angry northerners, Rehoboam musters up an army in the south. However, the prophet Shemaiah warns the king and "all Israel in Judah and Benjamin" that the kingdom split has come at the direc-

²⁹ JAPHET, *I & II Chronicles*, 658.

³⁰ WILLIAMSON, *Israel in Chronicles*, 103.

³¹ S.L. MCKENZIE, *The Chronicler's Use of the Deuteronomistic History* (HSM 33; Chico, CA 1985) 99-100.

tive of YHWH. By using this expression for the southern kingdom, a much more concise phrase than in 1 Kgs 12,23, the Chronicler can refer to the southern kingdom in terms similar to the old theme. The fact that they represent “all Israel” in essence confirms that Rehoboam did not cause the nation to fall completely; yet since the separation came from YHWH, this group could not embody “all Israel” *in toto*. As with the prophetic word of Ahijah in 10,15, so Shemaiah also supported the actions of Jeroboam and the northern kingdom in seceding from the southern kingdom.

4. *Is Rehoboam a valiant military leader?*

With respect to this last unsuccessful attempt to reclaim the kingdom (11,1-4), Japhet maintains that Rehoboam displayed a remarkable turnaround³². She explains that the Chronicler changes the depiction of Rehoboam in 1 Kings from one of the most sinful monarchs of Judah to a king with courage, flexibility, and humility. The formerly cowardly king now takes initiative with the military and also yields immediately to the “word of God” by sending the army home.

Nevertheless, to see him as a valiant military leader does not capture the point. The Chronicler retains this story in his history to show precisely that Rehoboam could not win a battle against the northern tribes because he was guilty of neglecting the sincere plea of his people³³. He offers no hint that this aspect of Rehoboam’s abortive attempt to regain the kingdom differs at all from the account in 1 Kings 12. In addition, Rehoboam does not stand out in any way as penitent in the event. Shemaiah prophesies to him and “all Israel in Judah and Benjamin” with the result that “they listened to the word of YHWH and returned and did not go against Jeroboam” (all plural verbs). Rehoboam himself did not send them home as a great leader in control of the situation, but faded into the background of all (southern) Israel acquiescing to the divine verdict. The Chronicler does have a particular way of describing true penance for a king as seen in his later additions to Rehoboam’s

³² JAPHET, *I & II Chronicles*, 660.

³³ I plan to explore this general relationship between a king’s sins and his performance at war in the books of Chronicles at greater length elsewhere.

reign (cf. 2 Chr 12,6.7.12) where the king penitently humbled himself (כָּנַע), but that terminology does not appear here ³⁴.

To summarize, the Chronicler accentuates Rehoboam's complicity in the division of Israel into two separate kingdoms with the integration of his "all Israel" theme into 2 Chr 10,1 – 11,4. The Chronicler takes a major interest in demonstrating the importance of the temple cult for post-exilic Yehud through the retelling of Israel's history wherein this theme of all Israel functioned as one critical component of its operation. While David won the full support of all Israel by means of his faithfulness to YHWH (cf. 1 Chr 12,17-19) and Solomon maintained it throughout his reign with his pious devotion (cf. 2 Chr 1,1-6; 7,4-10), Rehoboam's poor decisions condemn him more in Chronicles. Since he did not seek the welfare of all Israel, his callousness became the chief reason for why they split.

III. Solomon and the Temple

Such a conclusion with regard to Rehoboam, however, seems to leave an awkward tension with the Chronicler's thoroughly positive evaluation of Solomon. If all Israel could make the valid claim, "Your father made our yoke heavy" (2 Chr 10,4), would not that plea to Rehoboam also reveal a charge against Solomon as another suspect at the same time? After all, both kings receive blame in 1 Kings. Nevertheless, since the time of Braun and Mosis, scholars have recognized the remarkably favorable light in which the Chronicler has put Solomon. Of course, they never claimed that Solomon did everything perfectly, but they demonstrated how the Chronicler exalted him for his part in establishing the cult. Accordingly, though Mosis did not persuade many with his paradigms set for Saul, David, and Solomon, he did correctly see the temple's successful completion as the primary focus of Solomon's reign in Chronicles ³⁵.

Around the same time, Braun asserted that scholarship had paid too much attention to the figure of David in Chronicles to the ne-

³⁴ For the importance of the word כָּנַע to the Chronicler's history, see D.A. GLATT-GILAD, "The Root *kn'* and Historiographic Periodization in Chronicles", *CBQ* 64 (2002) 248-257.

³⁵ R. MOSIS, *Untersuchungen zur Theologie des chronistischen Geschichtswerkes* (Freiburg 1973) 162-169.

glect of Solomon. His first article explored how the Chronicler put Solomon in the same positive light as David with regard to divine election, unanimous support by all Israel, and dedication to the cult ³⁶. In a second article, he argued that the Chronicler magnified the character of Solomon the most in his role as “the chosen temple builder”, seen so clearly in his own additions in 1 Chronicles 22, 28, 29 ³⁷. As for the main report of Solomon in 2 Chronicles 1–9, Williamson avers that the middle block of chapters in 2 Chronicles 2–8 all concentrate on the temple (cf. 1,18 and 8,16) ³⁸, while the laudatory introductory and concluding material (i.e. 2 Chronicles 1 and 9) discuss features that only find their true expression in its construction ³⁹. Hence, although the Chronicler condemns Rehoboam for neglecting a major aspect of Israel’s temple cult (i.e. all Israel), he gives Solomon the highest praise for doing his part to establish its practice.

1. *Solomon’s labor force*

Unfortunately, scholars have judged too quickly that the heavy yoke Solomon placed on the people must stand as a contradiction to the Chronicler’s portrayal of him as a good king. Japhet takes this line when she contends that the Chronicler omits all the material from 1 Kings that would have incriminated him in that regard (e.g. 1 Kgs 5,27-28; 9,15) ⁴⁰, yet Dillard has shown how he left out not only those details but any report, whether praiseworthy (e.g. 1 Kgs 3,16-28) or condemnatory (e.g. 1 Kgs 11,1-13), that does not commend his work on the temple ⁴¹. In fact, the Chronicler concludes the account with a candid admission that he has not included everything from Solomon’s reign (2 Chr 9,29, “For the rest [...] from

³⁶ R. BRAUN, “Solomonic Apologetic in Chronicles”, *JBL* 92 (1973) 503-516.

³⁷ R. BRAUN, “Solomon, the Chosen Temple Builder: The Significance of 1 Chronicles 22, 28, and 29 for the Theology of Chronicles”, *JBL* 95 (1976) 581-590.

³⁸ I will be using the *BHS* versification for all references.

³⁹ H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, *1 and 2 Chronicles* (London 1982) 192.

⁴⁰ JAPHET, *I & II Chronicles*, 653.

⁴¹ R.B. DILLARD, “The Chronicler’s Solomon”, *WTJ* 43 (1981) 289-300, here 291-292.

first to last [...]), where he even directs the reader to a record called "the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite" (v. 30), presumably an account that included information on the heavy work that Solomon imposed on the people (cf. 1 Kgs 11,26-39). For these reasons, such omissions by the Chronicler (i.e. an argument from silence) cannot necessarily speak in the way Japhet would like them to. Any notion of Solomon subjecting Israelites to heavy labor simply does not support his primary objective (i.e. the temple), and so he leaves it out.

Along the same lines as Japhet, Klein has put forward a more robust argument on the basis of 2 Chr 2,16-17 and 8,7-10 as evidence that Solomon never imposed a heavy yoke on his subjects⁴². With the first text, Klein avers that the Chronicler has reversed the draft of Israelites in 1 Kgs 5,27-28 to include only resident aliens in 2 Chr 2,16⁴³. However, it is difficult to see the similarity between the two since the 1 Kings passage refers to groups of 10,000 men with a total of 30,000, whereas these numbers do not appear at all in 2 Chronicles 2. The Chronicler does borrow the material from the distinct, subsequent list in 1 Kgs 5,29 and applies this to the resident aliens in 2 Chr 2,16-17, but still, neither these verses nor any of 2 Chronicles 2 say anything about the people of Israel⁴⁴.

Rather than deny that Israelites took part in preparations for the temple, the Chronicler seems to assume it. In 2,16 he asserts that Solomon gathered the resident aliens "following the census David his father had taken [...]". Throughout 1 Chronicles 11-29, the Chronicler had at many points shown how David tried to involve as many people as possible in the temple project (see above). Even after David had gathered all Israel, the Chronicler illustrated how that support grew still greater with the help of those who were not part of all Israel, the resident aliens (cf. 1 Chr 22,2). In the same vein, since Solomon had already obtained the complete backing of all Israel in 2 Chr 1,1-6, the Chronicler

⁴² KLEIN, *2 Chronicles*, 158. Japhet seems to assume this at different points in her commentary. Cf. JAPHET, *I & II Chronicles*, 546, 624-625.

⁴³ KLEIN, *2 Chronicles*, 158 note 29. Elsewhere in his commentary, Klein suggests that the Chronicler omitted 1 Kgs 5,27-28 to relieve the contradiction with 9,20-22 and to salvage Solomon's reputation (39).

⁴⁴ Even if the notices in 1 Kgs 5,27-30 all apply to Israel, my main point remains that the Chronicler does not mention Israelites at all in 2 Chronicles 2.

shapes this episode to demonstrate that Solomon continued to build his labor force like David by enlisting the help of foreigners such as Hiram and his servants (vv. 1-15), and also the resident aliens in the land of Israel (vv. 16-17). In other words, the Chronicler mentions these extra workers in addition to all Israel (i.e. not to the exclusion of all Israel) as a means of illustrating the great amount of labor that went into the temple's construction and, hence, its greater glory.

2. *The problem of 2 Chr 8,9 and 10,4*

On the surface level, the text in 2 Chr 8,7-10 appears more difficult. Verse 9 reads, "But from the children of Israel Solomon made no slaves (עבדים) for his work, for they were soldiers, his commanders, his captains, and commanders of his chariots and his horsemen". How can the statements made in 8,9 and 10,4 make sense together? As a preliminary point, it is worth noting that the Chronicler has borrowed both texts from 1 Kings, yet no scholar (to my knowledge) has suggested that the people have made an illegitimate claim there (cf. 1 Kgs 9,22; 12,4). Additionally, Klein concedes that if we take the MT of 2 Chr 8,9 which includes the relative pronoun אשר, then the text would concede that Solomon did in fact submit Israelites to forced labor. However, along with most commentators and English translations, he takes into account several other textual witnesses that leave it out ⁴⁵.

Perhaps the broad range of meanings for the root עבד has caused the most difficulty for finding coherence between the accounts in 2 Chr 8,9 and 10,4, from the very positive ("servant") as with David in the dynastic oracle (e.g. 1 Chr 17,4) to the extremely negative ("slave") as in 2 Chr 8,9a. For the latter, the Chronicler confirms that Solomon did not oppress his own people with slave-labor, but imposed such work on non-Israelites. In contrast, the list of roles in 2 Chr 8,9b (i.e. soldiers, his commanders, etc.) does not present an exhaustive list of assignments the Israelites received but asserts that Solomon chose his leaders from his own people (cf. v. 10, "And these were the chief officers [...] 250 who ruled over the people"). Hence, 2 Chr 8,7-10 focuses on the highest and lowest ranks to as-

⁴⁵ Cf. KLEIN, *2 Chronicles*, 116, n. 11.

sert the two important facts that (1) Solomon did not subject Israelites to slavery and (2) he did not promote non-Israelites to leadership. On the other hand, these verses do not say anything about the majority of Israelites that fell in between these two ranks. Presumably, the Chronicler would still have the reader assume that this larger group performed very difficult work, even if it was not as bad as the forced labor to which Solomon subjected the resident aliens. He perhaps mentions one such servant (עֶבֶד) in the speech of Abijah, Jeroboam (cf. 2 Chr 13,6) ⁴⁶.

The plea of all Israel in 2 Chronicles 10 can be compatible with such an interpretation of 8,7-10. The people say in v. 4, "Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore, lighten the hard service (עֲבֹדָה) of your father and the heavy yoke that he placed on us, and we will serve (עֲבֹד, qal) you". Nothing in this verse resembles the slavery that appeared in 2 Chr 8,9, but describes the work that the people were willing to do. Klein assumes that the text uses the word for "yoke" (עֵל) in 10,4 with the familiar agricultural and oppressive sense metaphorically to refer to forced labor on state projects, but it makes little sense to assume a definition that already contradicts the passage in 8,7-10 (see the use of "forced labor" [מַס] in 8,8) ⁴⁷. They did not complain that they indeed had work/service (עֲבֹדָה) at all, but that it had grown to be too strenuous. Their offer to serve (עֲבֹד, qal) at the end of the verse, together with the counsel of the elders in v. 7 ("If you will be good to this people [...] they will be your servants [עֲבָדִים] forever."), further demonstrates their willingness to engage in work as long as the king would simply treat them well. Hence, the statements in 8,9 and 10,4 do make sense together in the Chronicler's narrative, just as they did in 1 Kings.

Yet the question may still remain: even if Solomon did not subject the Israelites to slavery as the text says in 8,9, does the Chronicler ever allude to any heavy work that would have caused all Israel to plead with Rehoboam as they do in 2 Chr 10,4? As noted above, the Chronicler focuses the entirety of Solomon's reign on his construction of the temple. Even so, he still has given some at-

⁴⁶ The fact that the Chronicler inserts this note about Solomon's servant Jeroboam alerts any interpreter to the wide semantic range of the noun.

⁴⁷ KLEIN, *2 Chronicles*, 158. Along these same lines, see also E.L. CURTIS – A.A. MADSEN, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Chronicles* (ICC; Edinburgh 1910) 363.

tention to the people at large. At various points in his reign, all Israel appears as a mark that Solomon faithfully sought YHWH (2 Chr 1,2; 7,6.8). Moreover, even though the Chronicler does not mention them specifically as taking part in the work of temple construction, the story makes little sense if they did not. Though this may not have resembled anything like the "forced labor" imposed on the indigenous peoples, they still would have needed to exert a great amount of energy to make their contribution to the temple project, a monumental endeavor in the Chronicler's narrative. All this positive (though rigorous) work still took its toll on the people, so that they asked for a lighter workload. They were willing to serve the new king Rehoboam, but they did not want to labor as hard as they did under Solomon. Although not explicitly stated by the Chronicler, the now finished temple must have been a factor in his depiction of the people's attitude ⁴⁸.

IV. The Scattered Testimony Concerning Jeroboam

Like Japhet, Knoppers also claims that the Chronicler's changes in the broader context lessen Rehoboam's guilt. However, instead of blaming the people for a false charge, he argues that Jeroboam victimized the tender-hearted Rehoboam in an effort to secure kingship for himself as a usurper. In his interpretation, two of the Chronicler's earlier changes figure heavily ⁴⁹. For his first point, Knoppers notes that the Chronicler leaves out the episode where YHWH promised Jeroboam his own separate kingdom with governance over all but one of Israel's tribes and with his own opportunity for an everlasting kingdom similar to David in 1 Kgs 11,26-39. He claims that this omission removes any legitimacy for the northern kingdom in Chronicles. Second, Knoppers suggests that the Chronicler's laudatory treatment of the united monarchy under David and Solomon due to their lifelong fidelity places a stigma on any tribe that would try to secede or on any person that would attempt to deviate from

⁴⁸ In other words, just because the Chronicler does not develop this aspect of the story it does not mean he cannot expect his readers to assume it. The Chronicler focuses on the actions of kings (e.g. Solomon's construction of the temple), not ordinary people.

⁴⁹ Cf. KNOPPERS, "Rehoboam in Chronicles", 430.

the norm that they set. With these points laid out, Knoppers argues that the Chronicler gives Jeroboam an increased role in the assembly at Shechem, which makes him the guilty party.

1. *Does the Chronicler incriminate Jeroboam?*

Nevertheless, both of Knoppers' points in support of this argument have weaknesses. Concerning the first, the Chronicler leaves out not only 1 Kgs 11,26-39 but virtually all material concerning Jeroboam's kingship or even northern kingship in general (cf. 1 Kgs 12,20)⁵⁰. Presumably, he would need to mention much more about its institution if he wanted to condemn it, but he only leaves in details that would seem to legitimize its existence (again, 2 Chr 10,15; 11,4). As Knoppers acknowledges, the Chronicler holds to a strict policy of recording events in the northern kingdom only when they intersect with the southern kingdom. If this is the case, one should not make too much of certain omissions.

As for the second point, the Chronicler does seem to hold a special place for the Davidic monarchy as Knoppers has suggested⁵¹, but he also shows that the Davidides suffered judgment when they acted unfaithfully, just as Rehoboam did (see above). For example, the Chronicler will illustrate YHWH's wrath later as he uses the northern kingdom to punish the Davidic king Ahaz for his idolatry (2 Chr 28,5.9)⁵². Certainly unfaithfulness to YHWH could tear apart the united kingdom of Israel, but as I have argued above, the Chronicler rebukes Rehoboam for denying the plea of all Israel, an important cultic institution established by David. Does the Chronicler criticize Jeroboam anywhere in his narrative?

⁵⁰ Most references to northern kingship are mundane and borrowed; cf. 2 Chr 13,2; 16,1; 18,3. Much later, YHWH gives Judah into the hand of the northern king, which seems to lend it at least some legitimacy (28,5). The Chronicler contends that Amaziah also lost to the northern kingdom because of his sin (cf. 25,20).

⁵¹ Though scholars have greatly debated this topic, cf. KELLY, *Retribution and Eschatology*, 135-185.

⁵² The Chronicler shows the guilt of the northern kingdom for their brutality in the event, but the fact remains that "Because YHWH the God of your fathers was angry with Judah he gave them into your (i.e. northern Israel's) hand" (v. 9).

Knoppers continues to build his case against Jeroboam from two specific texts where he detects the Chronicler's hand. The evidence in the first text seems very subtle, which perhaps explains why Knoppers alludes to it only in a footnote even though it takes a substantial place in his argument. Although Jeroboam plays the same role in 2 Chr 10,1-19 (MT) as with 1 Kgs 12,1-19 (MT), Knoppers asserts that other textual witnesses reveal how Jeroboam likely did not appear in the Chronicler's *Vorlage* at 1 Kgs 12,2.3.12⁵³. In other words, the Chronicler has made him the leader of the group making a challenge to Rehoboam. This interpretation, however, seems very speculative. No criteria have been established for what the Chronicler may have had as his *Vorlage* here, or for why he would not have borrowed more if he had it. Many scholars acknowledge that the supplement at 3 Kgdms 12,24 depicts an increased role for Jeroboam in the split⁵⁴, and so the omission of such material argues against the presumably intensified role of Jeroboam in 2 Chronicles 10⁵⁵.

Nevertheless, we may still for the sake of argument consider the possibility that the Chronicler has in fact inserted Jeroboam into the negotiations at Shechem alongside the people. First, these putative additions still do not make Jeroboam take any leadership in the appeal to Rehoboam. After he comes back to Israel from Egypt (v. 2), all Israel sends and calls him to join them at the assembly (v. 3). There, they all speak (יידברו) to Rehoboam together without any hint that Jeroboam is the instigator (see also v. 12). Some have noted that the account in 1 Kgs 12,2 (MT) states that Jeroboam stayed in Egypt upon news of the council at Shechem and came only when he was called upon. If such is the case, then perhaps the Chronicler gives him a greater role in the northern secession in Chronicles since he returns on his own accord⁵⁶. How-

⁵³ Though he does not mention any one witness in particular, he likely refers to the longer version of these events in 3 Kingdoms (LXX).

⁵⁴ Cf. A. FRISCH, "Jeroboam and the Division of the Kingdom: Mapping Contrasting Biblical Accounts", *JANES* 27 (2000) 15-29, here 22-23.

⁵⁵ Too much research on the text of the supplement exists to list here, but for recent discussion, cf. C.S. SHAW, "The Sins of Rehoboam: The Purpose of 3 Kingdoms 12.24A-Z", *JSOT* 73 (1997) 55-64. For an older, more thorough analysis of the textual evidence, cf. J.C. TREBOLLE BARRERA, *Salomón y Jeroboán. Historia de la recensión y redacción de 1 Reyes 2-12, 14* (Institución San Jerónimo 10; Valencia 1980).

⁵⁶ Cf. KLEIN, 2 *Chronicles*, 150.

ever, this reading for 1 Kgs 12,2 clearly contradicts the inference in 11,40 that he returned when Solomon died ⁵⁷. *BHS* suggests amending the text in 1 Kgs 12,2 so that it agrees with the text of 2 Chr 10,2.

Second and more importantly, if "all Israel" carries the same connotation as it did in all its occurrences prior to this passage as argued above, then Jeroboam has sympathized with their cause, unlike Rehoboam. In this case, the Chronicler seems to insert Jeroboam into the story as a noteworthy contrast to the recalcitrant Rehoboam. In the end, whatever text the Chronicler may have used as his *Vorlage*, he ultimately pictures Jeroboam as faithfully collaborating with all Israel as did Rehoboam's predecessors David and Solomon, placing him in a very positive light. Nevertheless, the details of the story that the Chronicler has kept make the most sense if we keep in mind the sources to which he has already called our attention (i.e. the prophecy of Ahijah, cf. 9,30). Mitchell avers, "The reader of Chronicles does not have to know Samuel-Kings in order to get the message of Chronicles. But the reader of Chronicles who also knows Samuel-Kings can appreciate the dialogue between the two, as well as the little ironies and playfulness that Chronicles has built into its text" ⁵⁸.

2. *The evidence from Abijah's speech*

Knoppers makes a more substantial case for Jeroboam's guilt from Abijah's speech to Jeroboam and the rest of the northerners (2 Chr 13,4-12) ⁵⁹. Many scholars have identified this text as distinctive of the Chronicler's own theology due to the particular themes and vocabulary mentioned within it ⁶⁰. More importantly, since Abijah comes immediately after Rehoboam, his speech offers

⁵⁷ See also S.L. MCKENZIE, "The Source for Jeroboam's Role at Shechem (1 Kgs 11:43-12:3, 12, 20)", *JBL* 106 (1987) 297-300.

⁵⁸ C. MITCHELL, "The Dialogism of Chronicles", *The Chronicler as Author* (eds. M.P. GRAHAM – S.L. MCKENZIE) (JSOTSS 238; Sheffield 1999) 311-326, here 326.

⁵⁹ See also his other article: G.N. KNOPPERS, "'Battling Against Yahweh': Israel's War Against Judah in 2 Chr 13:2-20", *RB* 100 (1993) 511-532.

⁶⁰ G. VON RAD, *Old Testament Theology* (Edinburgh 1962) 353, describes it as "a brief compendium of the Chronicler's theology".

direct insight into the Chronicler's own understanding of the division of the kingdom. From this text, Knoppers contends that the Chronicler's Abijah condemns Jeroboam for his institution of a false kingship in 13,5-7, a blatant assault on the divinely sanctioned Davidic kingdom. Of course, such an interpretation would give viability to his argument that the Chronicler inserted Jeroboam's name in the text at 10,2,3, and 12 (see above). Though Japhet places the blame more on the people (less on Jeroboam), she also argues that the Chronicler uses the speech in 2 Chr 13,4-12 to change history with a revision of the northern secession more favorable to Rehoboam⁶¹. In what follows, I will show that the Chronicler has stayed much closer to the storyline in 1 Kings than Knoppers or Japhet have argued.

Abijah's speech divides nicely into two parts, an explanation of how the once unified kingdom split in the past (vv. 5-7) and a comparison of the two autonomous kingdoms in the present (vv. 8-12). The second quite clearly contains a rebuke directed at the northerners for their idolatrous cult, but does the first really offer an indictment for the establishment of a separate kingship as Knoppers and Japhet have claimed?⁶²

Abijah's opening statement may seem to point in that direction. After a brief address to the northerners (v. 4b), Abijah declares, "Do you not know that YHWH the God of Israel gave kingship over Israel to David and his sons forever as a covenant of salt?" (v. 5)⁶³. The content of this verse refers back to 1 Chr 17,14 when YHWH promised David a place in his (i.e. God's) kingdom for all time. Later, at the end of his reign, David's speech to the different leaders of Israel in 28,1-10 asserted the continuance of this promise since God had chosen his son Solomon after him "to sit on the throne of the kingdom of Yahweh over Israel" (v. 5). Even so, an element of individual conditionality remained in the covenant for the Davidic kings as stated later in v. 9b: "If you seek (דרש) him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake (עזב) him, he will cast you off forever". For Solomon specifically, this meant carrying out

⁶¹ JAPHET, *I & II Chronicles*, 691-692.

⁶² See also DE VRIES, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 295; KLEIN, *2 Chronicles*, 200.

⁶³ See the discussion in JAPHET, *I & II Chronicles*, 691. This expression points to the eternal nature of the covenant; cf. Lev 2,13; Num 18,19.

the construction of the temple (v. 10), which he sought to do from the very beginning of his reign (2 Chronicles 1–2) and eventually completed (2 Chronicles 3–7). Abijah opened his speech with such a loaded statement because he wanted to show how even though previous regrettable circumstances put YHWH's promises into question, they would certainly not negate his covenant with the Davidic line.

3. *The ambiguity in 2 Chr 13,6-7*

With the explanation in vv. 6-7, scholars have offered two different interpretations due to the ambiguous terms אֲדֹנָי ("his lord") in v. 6 and the pronominal suffix of עָלָיו ("about him") in v. 7. In one interpretation, Japhet identifies אֲדֹנָי as Solomon so that v. 6 alludes to Jeroboam's rebellion as recorded in 1 Kgs 11,26-40⁶⁴. As she concedes, this amounts to an unexpected reference since the Chronicler does not include that part of 1 Kings in his narrative. Nevertheless, she argues that the strong language of a slave (עֶבֶד) rebelling against his lord (אֲדֹנָי) indicates that the seeds of division were sown well before Rehoboam came to power.

Next, she suggests that the ambiguous pronoun in v. 7 refers to Jeroboam in the subsequent stage of his revolt. This time "worthless scoundrels" gather to him so that together they defied (יִתְאַמְצוּ עָלָיו) God's chosen king. In doing this, she continues, the Chronicler changes the justifiable complaint made by the people in 1 Kings into an "irresponsible act of a handful of blackguards".

Knoppers takes a similar line, but also remarks that the division took place when the weak-hearted and inexperienced Rehoboam had just assumed the throne, thus alleviating him from some of the blame he received in 1 Kings 12⁶⁵. In addition, this interpretation places the culpability more squarely on Jeroboam for taking advantage of the vulnerable king. Following Abijah's affirmation of the Davidic kingship in v. 5, this reading of vv. 6-7 blames the opportunistic Jeroboam for establishing another kingship illicitly.

⁶⁴ JAPHET, *I & II Chronicles*, 691-692.

⁶⁵ KNOPPERS, "Rehoboam in Chronicles", 439.

Though this interpretation may work somewhat for v. 6, Japhet's identification of the pronominal suffix in *עליו* with Jeroboam in v. 7 creates several problems. For example, the Chronicler's report of the Shechem council nowhere records any group resembling "blackguards", but he modifies the text so that all Israel stands with Jeroboam against the new king Rehoboam. As we saw in the reigns of David and Solomon, the Chronicler uses this moniker to signify the idealized faithful within the country, and so the "worthless scoundrels" cannot refer to them.

Furthermore, this interpretation must translate the expression *על יתאמנו* as "defy" to make the point, yet nowhere else does this verb in any form have this sense. Dillard cautions against putting too much weight on this word because it occurs only once in the hith-pael with this preposition⁶⁶, but certainly it must mean something closer to the root's other uses than what Japhet has suggested. Williamson has offered a different interpretation of vv. 6-7 which attributes both of the ambiguous terms to Rehoboam⁶⁷. This reading makes a better identification of *אדניו*, since Jeroboam's rebellion against Rehoboam does exist in the Chronicler's history (cf. 2 Chronicles 10). For the pronoun in *עליו*, this identification also coheres more with the Chronicler's text, since *אדניו* would be the nearest antecedent. Moreover, it allows a more natural use of *על יתאמנו* as "prevailed over" similar to v. 18 or even "persuaded", which fits well as a reference to how the young counsel urged Rehoboam to take his foolish action (10,8-11)⁶⁸. Thus, Williamson's solution appears to fit better in the close context of the speech (13,4-12) and also in the larger context of the Shechem council (2 Chronicles 10).

A look at the Chronicler's creative use of the word *בן* (6x in vv. 5-8) will help bring more clarity to the passage. Abijah's affirmation of God's everlasting promise to David and his sons (*בניו*) to rule over Israel in v. 5 would have provoked the question: how could this be true if the northerners had already split off by Abijah's time? Abijah explains by discussing two sons in v. 6, where Jeroboam, the son of Nebat (*בן-נבט*; not David), who was merely a servant

⁶⁶ R.B. DILLARD, *2 Chronicles* (WBC 15; Waco, TX 1987) 107-108.

⁶⁷ WILLIAMSON, *Israel in Chronicles*, 110.

⁶⁸ WILLIAMSON, *Israel in Chronicles*, 112.

(עֶבֶר) of Solomon, the son of David (בֶּן-דָּוִיד), rebelled (מָרַד) against his master (i.e. Rehoboam). Though Japhet argues that the label עֶבֶר, which she translates "slave", reflects poorly on Jeroboam, it likely has the more neutral/positive nuance of "servant" as it is used for Jeroboam in 1 Kgs 11,26 (see also v. 13 and again 2 Chr 8,9)⁶⁹. Additionally, scholars have also seen a criticism against Jeroboam in the word מָרַד, which can carry either a negative (e.g. 2 Kgs 24,1) or a positive (e.g. 2 Kgs 18,7) connotation⁷⁰. Since Jeroboam had all Israel on his side at this point, its use here must point to his justified rebellion in 2 Chr 10,2-3. In fact, the support of the people makes him look more like a faithful leader than the true son of David, Rehoboam.

Nevertheless, this understanding leaves another question: how could a "son of Nebat", a servant of the "son of David", successfully rebel against the Davidic king? Abijah continues with two more "sons" in v. 7, where he explains that certain "sons of worthlessness" (בְּנֵי בָלִיעַל) prevailed over the "son of Solomon" when the latter was young and tender-hearted. YHWH had entrusted his kingdom to the Davidides as long as they remained faithful to him, especially as it pertained to matters of the temple cult (cf. 1 Chr 28,9-10). Rehoboam, however, squandered this blessing when the sons of worthlessness persuaded him to neglect one of the cult's most fundamental aspects (i.e. all Israel).

The Chronicler stresses Rehoboam's missed opportunity with his paradigmatic verb הִחְזִיק ("he could not strengthen himself before them", v. 7). He frequently uses the term (חִזָּק, hithpael) to show how various kings have established their kingdom (1 Chr 11,10; 2 Chr 1,1; 13,21; 15,8; 17,1; 27,6; 32,5; see especially 16:9). Rehoboam eventually did establish his kingdom according to 12,13, but his rule extended only to Jerusalem. This reflects poorly on him since he squandered the vast kingdom built by David and Solomon (cf. 9,26). Hence, Abijah's bold declarations on behalf of the Davidic monarchy (13,5.8) affirm that he himself will not continue Rehoboam's course, but faithfully maintain YHWH's cult established by David and Solomon (vv. 10-12).

⁶⁹ Cf. FRISCH, "Jeroboam and the Division of the Kingdom", 16-17, 25.

⁷⁰ JAPHET, *I & II Chronicles*, 691.

4. *Jeroboam's only misdemeanour*

The main point to be made here is that for the rest of his speech Abijah limited his criticism of Jeroboam solely to the cultic crimes that he committed well after the northern secession (cf. 11,14-15). He chided the northern king that he would not be able to strengthen himself (התחזק) before his army because he relied on large forces and the golden calves he had made (v. 8). For this reason, Abijah would not only triumph over Jeroboam's larger army but also strengthen himself (התחזק) afterwards (vv. 20-21). With this in mind, Abijah's assertions in vv. 5 and 8 do not necessarily offer any hidden criticism of northern kingship. They certainly could support explicit statements elsewhere that Jeroboam wrongfully sought an illicit kingship alongside the Davidides, but the Chronicler never provides these since he does not discuss the northern kingdom *per se*. Hence, the Chronicler does not blame Jeroboam for any crime until after his institution of the false cult in 2 Chr 11,14-15, just as in the account in 1 Kgs 12,25-33.

V. Conclusion: Only Rehoboam Receives Blame for the Schism

The Chronicler has not so much changed history with regard to the division of Israel's kingdom as reassessed the actions of Solomon, Rehoboam, and Jeroboam on the basis of their faithfulness to the temple cult. Since Solomon has finished the task of temple construction laid out before him by David (1 Chr 28,9-10), the Chronicler does not assign him any blame as in the account in 1 Kings. This does not mean the Chronicler denies that he gave the Israelites very difficult work to do or that he never committed any sin (cf. 2 Chr 6,36), but that he wishes to praise him simply for his devotion to the cult. This emphasis has led the Chronicler to place all the blame on Rehoboam for the schism. Rather than simply retell his blunder as 1 Kgs 12,1-24 describes it, the Chronicler contends that Rehoboam disregarded the sincere plea of all Israel, causing the break-up of a fundamental aspect of Israel's cultic life. With the character of Jeroboam, the Chronicler provides far less detail concerning his actions since he writes with regard to only the southern kingdom. He does condemn him for the establishment of a false

cult, but for the rest of his reign he only makes allusions to the report in 1 Kings 12–14. Thus, the Chronicler has narrowed down his list of suspects to the lone culprit Rehoboam for his unfaithfulness to the temple cult.

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SUMMARY

The Chronicler constantly adapts the story of Israel's kingship from the narrative in Samuel-Kings to show his great interest in the temple. With regard to the division of the united kingdom, recent scholarship has correctly shown how he has removed all the blame from Solomon due to his successful construction of the temple, but it has not come to any firm conclusion on whom the Chronicler does find guilty. This article contends that the Chronicler blames Rehoboam for ignoring the plea of "all Israel", an essential facet of the nation's temple worship.

Der Prophet als Bleilot. Exegese und Theologie in Amos 7 *

I. Die Frage nach dem “Historischen Amos”

“Vier Dinge führt uns die Schrift über diesen vollkommenen Propheten auf. Seinen Namen, seinen Beruf, den Namen seiner Stadt und die Zeit, zu der er prophezeite, eines nach dem anderen”¹. So beginnt der jüdische Gelehrte und Aufklärer Juda Leib ben Ze’eb in seiner 1810 erschienenen “Einleitung in die heiligen Schriften”² den Abschnitt über den Propheten Amos. Dieser *Mabo’* kann als erste jüdische historisch-kritische Einführung in die Schriften des Tanach, genauer: der Propheten und Schriften, verstanden werden. Anknüpfend an die literale Schriftauslegung des Renaissancegelehrten Azarya de Rossi in dessen *Me’or Enayim* wie an das Vorbild von Mendelssohns *Bi’ur* und, nicht zuletzt, die Einleitung in das Alte Testament von Eichhorn entsteht mit ihm im Umfeld der “Prager Haskala”³ eine neue Literaturgattung.

Ben Ze’eb’s direktes literarisches Vorbild Johann Gottfried Eichhorn — Breuer spricht in diesem Zusammenhang, m.E. dem Werk Ben Ze’eb’s nicht gerecht werdend, von “evident plagiarism”⁴ —

* Frau stud. theol. Megan Arndt und Herrn stud. phil. Melchior Klassen danke ich für Hilfe bei den Korrekturen.

¹ “ארבעה דברים פרט לנו הכתוב בנביא השלם הזה. שמו, ומלאכתו, ושם עירו, והזמן”
“מבוא אל מקראי קדש”; J. L. BEN ZE’EB, שבו נבא, בפרט אחר פרט”
47v.-48r.

² Aus der spärlichen Literatur zu Ben Ze’eb vgl. E. BREUER, “(Re)creating Traditions of Language and Texts: The Haskalah and Cultural Continuity”, *Modern Judaism* 16.2 (1996) 161-183.

³ Zur Charakterisierung einer spezifischen “Prager Haskala” gegenüber der Berliner Aufklärungsbewegung der ersten Generation um Mendelssohn vgl. R. KESTENBERG-GLADSTEIN, *Neuere Geschichte der Juden in den böhmischen Ländern*. I. Das Zeitalter der Aufklärung 1780-1830 (SWALBI 18/1; Tübingen 1969) 115-118.

⁴ E. BREUER, “Jewish Study of the Bible before and during the Jewish Enlightenment”, *Hebrew Bible / Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation*. 2. From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment (ed. M. SÆBØ) (Göttingen 2008) 1006-1023, 1022, Anm. 53.

weiß im dritten Band seiner „Einleitung in das Alte Testament“ von 1783 freilich noch ein wenig mehr zu berichten. So stelle der Prophet sich selbst zwar dar „als einen Mann von geringen Glücksumständen“⁵, gleichwohl habe man es mit keinem Ungebildeten zu tun. Der bürgerliche Leser kann beruhigt sein: „Ein dürftiger Hirte war also Amos; aber deswegen doch kein Mann vom Auswurf des Volks“⁶.

Vier Dinge also, so Ben Ze'eb, lassen sich über den historischen Amos sagen: Dass er Amos hieß, dass er Viehbesitzer war, aus Tekoa stammte, einem Weideort ca. drei Meilen von Jerusalem, und dass er in den Tagen Usijas und Jerobeams aufgetreten sei⁷.

Dieses Bild vom „historischen Amos“ speist sich bei Eichhorn, bei Ben Ze'eb und bei den vielen, die ihnen seit den Tagen der Aufklärung in den vergangenen zweihundert Jahren gefolgt sind, aus zwei Quellen. Zum einen ist es die Buchüberschrift in Am 1,1, zum anderen die einzige Prophetenerzählung, die sich in dem Büchlein findet: Am 7,10-17. Daran hat sich bis heute wenig geändert, wenn auch der Quellenwert beider Passagen in stärkerem Maße Gegenstand der Diskussion ist als vor zweihundert Jahren.

Hinsichtlich der Überschrift besteht ein weitgehender Konsens. „Worte des Amos, der unter den Schafzüchtern von Tekoa war, die er schaute über Israel in den Tagen Usijas, des Königs von Juda und Jerobeam ben Joaschs, des Königs von Israel, zwei Jahre vor dem Erdbeben“, wirkt im Hebräischen ebenso überladen wie im Deutschen und ist syntaktisch vielleicht noch unsauberer. Es irritiert etwa der doppelte Relativsatz, der die Worte vom Schauen trennt: Grammatikalisch „schaut“ Amos jetzt die Schafhirten, die somit verdächtig nach einer späteren Ergänzung aussehen. Zudem werden aber auch Worte, noch dazu eigene, in der Regel nicht „geschaut“ (vgl. noch Jes 2,1; Mi 1,1) — wohl aber Visionen, wie sie sich im zweiten bzw. dritten Buchteil⁸ finden und von denen noch die Rede

⁵ J.G. EICHORN, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*. Dritter und letzter Theil (Leipzig 1783) 293.

⁶ EICHORN, *Einleitung* III, 293.

⁷ Vgl. BEN ZE'EB, מִצְבֵּי, 48r.

⁸ Vgl. zur Gliederung des Buches grundlegend J. JEREMIAS, „Völkersprüche und Visionsberichte im Amosbuch“ [1989], *Hosea und Amos*. Studien zu den Anfängen des Dodekapropheten (ed. J. JEREMIAS) (FAT 13; Tübingen 1996) 157-171, rezipiert in den gängigen Einleitungen, so z.B. E. ZENGER, „Das Zwölfprophetenbuch“, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (ed. CHR. FREVEL) (Stuttgart⁸2012) 622-699, 642.

sein wird. Beide folgenden Datierungen haften nun ihrerseits am Schauen der Worte, sind also ebenfalls mutmaßlich sekundär. Es ist daher wahrscheinlich, dass die Überschrift ursprünglich einmal lediglich "Worte des Amos von Tekoa" ankündigte ⁹. Von Ben Ze'eb's vier Realien bleiben also lediglich zwei übrig: der Name und der Heimatort des Propheten.

II. Die Amazja-Erzählung im Kontext des Visionen-Zyklus

Wie steht es nun um die zweite Informationsquelle, die kurze Erzählung in Am 7,10-17?

Zwei kleine Akte werden in ihr aufgeführt. Der erste spielt sich in V. 10 und 11 ab, zwischen Amazja, "dem" Priester von Bethel und König Jerobeam. Bereits hier wird dramatisch stilisiert und fokussiert, denn "[d]en Priester von Bethel' kann es nicht gegeben haben" ¹⁰. Durch einen Brief oder Boten lässt dieser jenen von der vermeintlichen Intrige des Propheten wissen. Wie und ob der König antwortet, bleibt offen, doch agiert Amazja in der zweiten Szene, ab V. 12, gegenüber Amos so, als hätte er einen entsprechenden offiziellen Bescheid bekommen. Er gibt dem Propheten einen nicht ohne Nachdruck vorgebrachten guten Ratschlag: Amos wird ausgewiesen.

Amos seinerseits antwortet, und so gerät die Szene zu einem Rededuell. Der Prophet weist es zurück, als ein solcher angesprochen zu werden, um einen Vers später nichts anderes zu tun, als eben prophetisch aufzutreten und dem Priester ein formtypisches Gerichtswort entgegenzuschleudern ¹¹. Dieses Gerichtswort enthält

⁹ Vgl. H.W. WOLFF, *Dodekapropheton 2. Joel und Amos* (BK 14/2; Neukirchen-Vluyn ²1975) 146-147; J. JEREMIAS, *Der Prophet Amos* (ATD 24,2; Göttingen 1995) 1-2; R.G. KRATZ, "Die Worte des Amos von Tekoa" [2003], *Prophetenstudien. Kleine Schriften II* (ed. R.G. KRATZ) (FAT 74; Tübingen 2011) 310-343, 312-313.

¹⁰ C. LEVIN, "Amos und Jerobeam I." [1995], *Fortschreibungen. Gesamtelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (ed. C. LEVIN) (BZAW 316; Berlin – New York 2003) 256-264, 258 (Hervorhebung Levin).

¹¹ Zur formalen Gestaltung eines prophetischen Gerichtswortes vgl. K. KOCH, *Was ist Formgeschichte?* Methoden der Biblexegese (Neukirchen-Vluyn ⁵1989) 258-260.

nun, an Amazja gewandt, genau die göttlichen Strafen, von denen dieser gegenüber dem König behauptet hatte, Amos würde sie heraufbeschwören. Amazja macht Amos auf diese Weise erst zu dem Propheten, den er angeklagt und ausgewiesen wissen möchte. Damit, und nicht früher, erreicht die Erzählung ihr schlüssiges Ziel, und dieser Umstand spricht eher dagegen, innerhalb ihrer ein literarisches Wachstum anzunehmen, wie es etwa Levin in vier aufeinander aufbauenden Fortschreibungen (VV. 10-11 | 12-13 | 14f-15 | 16-15) rekonstruiert ¹².

1. *Der literarische Zusammenhang von Am 7,10-17*

In sich ist die Geschichte also rund, doch mit Blick auf den Kontext stellen sich zwei Fragen. Zum einen: Worauf bezieht sich der Anfang? Die unvermittelte Aktion des Priesters ist nur dann verständlich, wenn der Leser zumindest eine Ahnung davon hat, wer Amos ist und was im Vorfeld geschehen sein soll. Ähnliches gilt für das Ende. Das große Wort ist gesprochen, aber man fragt sich: Was geschieht jetzt? Unter anderem aufgrund dieser beiden Beobachtungen hat man lange vermutet, die Episode habe ursprünglich an einer anderen Stelle im Buch gestanden oder, und diese Meinung ist nach wie vor sehr beliebt, sie sei zunächst selbständig überliefert und, etwa aus "Spuren einer historischen Erinnerung" ¹³ erst später an ihrer heutigen Stelle eingefügt worden ¹⁴. Diese These beantwortet jedoch die eben gestellten Fragen nicht, sondern verschärft sie. Ohne Kontext, als selbständige Überlieferung, ist das Stück zumindest schwer verständlich.

Ein anderes Bild ergibt sich dagegen, wenn man sich die Stellung der Geschichte in ihrem jetzigen literarischen Zusammenhang

¹² Vgl. Levin, "Amos und Jeroboam", 257-258.

¹³ P. RIEDE, *Vom Erbarmen zum Gericht*. Die Visionen des Amosbuches (Am 7-9*) und ihr literatur- und traditionsgehistorischer Zusammenhang (WMANT 120; Neukirchen-Vluyn 2008) 309.

¹⁴ Vgl. aus jüngerer Zeit noch L. SCHMIDT, "Die Amazja-Erzählung (Am 7,10-17) und der historische Amos", *ZAW* 119 (2007) 221-235, 226; M. KÖHLMOOS, *Bet-El — Erinnerungen einer Stadt*. Perspektiven der alttestamentlichen Bet-El-Überlieferung (FAT 49; Tübingen 2006) 107; J. BARTON, *The Theology of the Book of Amos* (Cambridge 2012) 47-48.

ansieht, den als Selbstberichten formulierten Amosvisionen. Der Fremdbbericht von der Begegnung Amos' mit Amazja steht zwischen der dritten und der vierten Vision. Gewöhnlich sagt man, sie unterbreche dabei den Visionenzyklus¹⁵. Auf jeden Fall zieht der Einschub den Zusammenhang der beiden eng zusammengehörenden Visionen drei und vier auseinander.

Gleichwohl, das hat zum ersten Mal *en détail* wohl Utzschneider gezeigt¹⁶, ist die Erzählung auf vielfache Weise mit den Visionen verbunden, und hier vor allem mit derjenigen, die ihr unmittelbar vorangeht, in welcher der Prophet den Herrn sieht, יְהוָה in der Hand, auf einer Mauer von יְהוָה stehend — eine anthropomorphe Gotteschau, die ein Teil der LXX-Überlieferung dadurch vermeidet, dass in ihr noch eine dritte Person, ein "Mann" auftritt: "Siehe, ein Mann stand" (ἰδοὺ ἄνθρωπος ἑστῆκεν)¹⁷.

Im Hinblick auf diese dritte Vision selbst sind zwei Beobachtungen wichtig: 1. Ihr Ende hat die Vision eigentlich schon mit Vers 8. Amos sieht etwas, er rekapituliert, was er sieht, und der Herr deutet diese Vision. Am Ende steht das Fazit: Nicht mehr länger [...]. Vers 9 bringt demgegenüber eine Konkretion, er ist eine Deutung der Deutung, die heraussticht und erklärt, was es heißt, wenn Gott nicht mehr länger vorübergeht. Offensichtlich handelt es sich hier um einen Zusatz¹⁸ zur Vision vom, und das ist der andere Punkt: 2. יְהוָה. Dies ist offensichtlich das Schlüsselwort der ganzen Vision. Amos sieht יְהוָה, und das scheint, in welcher Form auch immer, nichts Gutes zu bedeuten.

Die Bezüge der Erzählung zu dieser Vision und in ihr besonders zu V. 9 sind nun in der Tat offenkundig: "Of course there are links

¹⁵ Vgl. stellvertretend für den exegetischen Konsens WOLFF, *Joel und Amos*, 355.

¹⁶ Vgl. H. UTZSCHNEIDER, "Die Amazjaerzählung (Am 7,10-17) zwischen Literatur und Historie", *BN* 41 (1988) 76-101; F.I. ANDERSEN – D.N. FREEDMAN, *Amos. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 24A; Garden City, NY 1989) 765.

¹⁷ Vgl. J. ZIEGLER, *Duodecim prophetae* (Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum 13; Göttingen³ 1984) 198.

¹⁸ Vgl. u. a. LEVIN, "Amos und Jerobeam I", 257; I. WILLI-PLEIN, *Vorformen der Schriftexegese innerhalb des Alten Testaments*. Untersuchungen zum literarischen Werden der auf Amos, Hosea und Micha zurückgehenden Bücher im hebräischen Zwölfprophetenbuch (BZAW 123; Berlin – New York 1971) 46; L. SCHMIDT, "Amazja-Erzählung", 225.

between 7.10-17 and 7.9”¹⁹. Nach der Rede Amazjas plant Amos einen Aufstand “inmitten des Hauses Israel” (בְּקֶרֶב בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, V. 10), also dort, wohin JHWH das bewusste אֵנֶךְ zu legen beabsichtigt (בְּקֶרֶב עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל, V. 8). Amos predige ferner den Tod Jerobeams durch das Schwert (בַּחֶרֶב, V. 11), so wie es die Deutung der Vision nach Vers 9 ankündigt (וְקָמְתִי עַל־יִרְבְּעָם בַּחֶרֶב). Amazja spricht schließlich Amos in V. 12 als “Seher” (חֹזֶה) an. Im Kontext ist diese Anrede sachgemäß: Amos hat ja etwas gesehen²⁰. Nun soll er “nicht länger fortfahren zu prophezeien” (לֹא־תוֹסִיף עוֹד לַהֲנַבֵּא, V. 13), so wie JHWH “nicht länger fortfahren wird vorüberzugehen” (לֹא־אֹסִיף) (עוֹד, 7,8; 8,2)²¹. Die Begründung, die Amazja für dieses Verbot in Vers 13 gibt, klingt seltsam genug: Bethel sei ein Heiligtum (מִקְדָּשׁ) des Königs — aber sie ist sinnvoll nach Vers 9: Dort war ja die Zerstörung der Heiligtümer (מִקְדָּשִׁים) angekündigt worden — und מִקְדָּשׁ ist nicht eben Standardvokabular, wenn es um Tempel geht: “*mqdš* wird am häufigsten in Ez., P und Chr. gebraucht und hat keine alten Belege”²². Amos’ Antwort greift nun ihrerseits nicht nur die Rede Amazjas selbst auf, sondern rekurriert ebenfalls auf die vorausgehenden Visionen: Er verweist auf das Verbot, dem Haus Isaak zu weissagen. Wie in Vers 9 wird dabei der Erzvater in einer außergewöhnlichen und sehr seltenen Schreibweise nicht יִצְחָק, sondern יִשְׁחָק genannt²³. In der Ankündigung schließlich, das Ackerland des Priesters werde mit dem Messstrick aufgeteilt werden (Wurzel חִלַּק), kann man einen Rekurs auf die zweite Vision sehen, in der das vom großen Feuer verwüstete Kulturland ebenfalls und in dieser Formulierung nicht ganz alltäglich חִלַּק genannt wird (7,4).

2. Am 7,10-17: literarische und historische Fragen

Diese ganzen direkten Bezüge machen es meiner Meinung nach äußerst unwahrscheinlich, dass hier ein selbständig überliefertes

¹⁹ A.G. AULD, *Amos* (OTG; Sheffield 1986) 28.

²⁰ Vgl. S.M. PAUL, *A Commentary on the Book of Amos* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN 1991) 240.

²¹ Vgl. für diese Bezüge UTZSCHNEIDER, “Amazja-Erzählung”, 81-85 und jüngst G. STEINS, *Gericht und Vergebung. Re-Visionen zum Amosbuch* (SBS 221; Stuttgart 2010) 96-97.

²² LEVIN, “Amos und Jerobeam I”, 257.

²³ Sonst nur Jer 33,26 (MT); Ps 105,9; vgl. LEVIN, “Amos und Jerobeam I”, 257.

Traditionsstück eingearbeitet wurde. Stattdessen deuten sie vehement darauf hin, dass die kleine Episode von Amos und Amazja eigens für ihren jetzigen Kontext formuliert wurde ²⁴. Sie ist ein Einschreibungstext, und wer immer ihn schrieb, er (oder sie) kannte nicht nur die vorhergehenden Visionen, sondern ganz offensichtlich auch bereits die (sekundäre) Interpretation der dritten Amosvision durch 7,9. Wöhrle stuft 7,9 zwar als jünger ein als die Erzählung 7,10-17 ²⁵, doch erscheint mir dies als wenig plausibel. Dieser Vers ist m.E. im Kontext der Vision ohne die Szene gut verständlich — umgekehrt gilt dies jedoch schwerlich: Amazjas Verleumdung hinge ohne diese Gerichtsankündigung vollkommen in der Luft. Hierin liegt die „Brückenfunktion“ ²⁶ von 7,9, und hierin liegen auch die Gründe für Dijkstra, den Vers gar nicht zur Vision, sondern zur Erzählung zu rechnen ²⁷. Gleichwohl ist die Brücke in beide Richtungen zu betreten: Das Konsekutivperfekt von 7,9 erfordert die vorangehende Gottesrede. 7,9 setzt 7,7-8, und 7,10-17 setzen 7,9 voraus.

Uwe Becker hat vor gut zehn Jahren dargelegt, dass auch die vier Amosvisionen in ihrer heutigen Gestalt selbst durch enge Bezüge mit dem Spruchkorpus des Amosbuches verbunden sind und auch außerhalb dieses Buches bereits vergleichsweise junge Texte aus dem Bereich der Urgeschichte und der Exodusüberlieferung kennen. Die Konsequenz daraus ist, dass auch sie schwerlich mit einem Propheten des achten vorchristlichen Jahrhunderts in direkte Verbindung gebracht werden können ²⁸. Diese Ansicht ist nicht unwidersprochen geblieben, scheint sich an der Datierung der Visionen doch die Frage nach dem Proprium israelitischer Prophe-

²⁴ Vgl. ANDERSEN – FREEDMAN, *Amos*, 765.

²⁵ Vgl. J. WÖHRLE, *Die frühen Sammlungen des Zwölfprophetenbuches*. Entstehung und Komposition (BZAW 360; Berlin – New York 2006) 113.

²⁶ J. JEREMIAS, „Die Anfänge des Dodekapropheten: Hosea und Amos“ [1992], *Hosea und Amos*. Studien zu den Anfängen des Dodekapropheten (ed. J. JEREMIAS) (FAT 13; Tübingen 1996) 34-54, 47.

²⁷ Vgl. M. DIJKSTRA, „‘I am neither a prophet nor a prophet’s pupil’. Amos 7:9-17 as the Presentation of a Prophet like Moses“, *The Elusive Prophet. The Prophet as a Historical Person, Literary Character and Anonymous Artist* (ed. J.C. DE MOOR) (OTS 45; Leiden 2001) 105-128, 114-116.

²⁸ Vgl. U. BECKER, „Der Prophet als Fürbitter. Zum literarhistorischen Ort der Amosvisionen“, *VT* 51 (2001) 141-165.

tie in vorexilischer Zeit zu entscheiden. Entsprechend wird vielfach affirmativ an der "Authentizität" der Visionen festgehalten, um anhand ihrer, so Gertz, den "Übergang zur unbedingten Gerichtsprphetie [...] auf eine historische Prophetengestalt Amos" zurückzuführen²⁹. Gertz argumentiert dabei mit der Bileam-Inschrift von Deir 'Alla. Ob diese indes die ihr hier zugemutete argumentative Last zu tragen vermag, ist eine andere Frage. Denn bei allem, was Bileam hier prophetisch heraufziehen sieht: Es ist vom absoluten "Nein des Amos" doch kategorial unterschieden³⁰. Die von Becker beobachteten literarischen Bezüge bleiben zudem davon völlig unberührt und werden m.E. von Gertz als Argumente nicht entkräftet. Zurecht ist Waschkes Auswertung der Inschrift von Deir 'Alla deutlich zurückhaltender: Er leitet (ohne Diskussion der Arbeiten von Becker und Gertz) aus ihr lediglich ab, dass man als Prophet im achten Jahrhundert Visionen haben konnte³¹.

Wöhrle argumentiert dagegen mit Blick auf die Visionen überlieferungsgeschichtlich. Zwar folgt er Beckers literarischer Analyse weitgehend, will aber die Datierung ins achte Jahrhundert dadurch retten, dass er hinter der exegetisch zugänglichen literarischen Gestalt "vorgegebenes Gut"³² vermutet. Riede schließlich ignoriert schlicht Beckers Beobachtungen und plädiert im Anschluss an die Arbeiten von Jörg Jeremias erneut für einen "auf Amos selbst oder einen Schülerkreis" zurückgehenden Zyklus von fünf Visionen, der auch den "Abschnitt 9,2-4a" umfasst habe³³, wie ähnlich auch die jüngsten Arbeiten von Radine und Hadjiev³⁴.

²⁹ J.C. GERTZ, "Die unbedingte Gerichtsankündigung des Amos", *Gottes Wege suchend*. Beiträge zum Verständnis der Bibel und ihrer Botschaft. Festschrift Rudolf Mosis (ed. F. SEDLMEIER) (Würzburg 2004) 153-170, 155-156.

³⁰ Vgl. R.G. KRATZ, "Der Zorn Kamoschs und das Nein JHWHs. Vorstellungen vom Zorn Gottes in Moab und Israel", *Prophetenstudien*. Kleine Schriften II (ed. R. G. KRATZ) (FAT 74; Tübingen 2011) 71-98, 93-96.

³¹ E.-J. WASCHKE, "Anmerkungen zu den ersten vier Visionen des Amos (Am 7,1-8; 8,1.2)", *Ex Oriente Lux*. Studien zur Theologie des Alten Testaments. Festschrift Rüdiger Lux (eds. A. BERLEJUNG – R. HECKL) (Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte 39; Leipzig 2012) 419-434, 420.

³² WÖHRLE, *Die frühen Sammlungen*, 109.

³³ RIEDE, *Erbarmen*, 309.

³⁴ Vgl. J. RADINE, *The Book of Amos in Emergent Judah* (FAT.II 45; Tübingen 2010) 38; für die ersten vier Visionen: T.S. HADJIEV, *The Composition and Redaction of the Book of Amos* (BZAW 393; Berlin – New York 2009) 77.

3. Fazit: historische oder literarische Persönlichkeit?

Für die hier behandelte Fragestellung ist es freilich von eher geringer Bedeutung, ob die Amosvisionen ganz oder zum Teil auf einen Propheten des achten oder des fünften Jahrhunderts zurückgehen. Wichtig ist mit Blick auf die Amazja-Geschichte: Sie rekurriert auf einen Vers (7,9), der die dritte Vision (7,7-8) auslegt, die, folgt man den Argumenten Beckers, ihrerseits bereits eine Fortschreibung des prophetischen Spruchkorpus in fortgeschrittener Gestalt ist. Um "Leben und Werk" des Propheten zu rekonstruieren, ist, so oder so, demnach auch diese Quelle von eher minderem Wert. Christoph Levin benennt es eindeutig: "Zu Amos selbst ist von hier nicht zu gelangen" ³⁵. Zu den Argumenten, die sich aus der relativen Datierung innerhalb des Amosbuches ergeben, kommt eine wichtige Beobachtung Graeme Aulds: Die Prophetenlegende im Amosbuch ist nicht nur offensichtlich mit der Geschichte in 1 Kön 13 verwandt, sondern auch mit derjenigen in 2 Chr 25,14-16, die als Kontrahenten eines Propheten ebenfalls einen Amazja bietet, der hier freilich kein Vertrauter des Königs, sondern dieser selbst ist ³⁶. Zudem weise auch die Anrede Amos' als eines "Sehers" (חֹזֶה) in die (zeitliche) Nähe der Chronik: "[The word] occurs mostly [...] in titles of prophetic books (including Amos 1.1); and in material special to the books of Chronicles" ³⁷.

Ungeachtet dieser doch recht eindeutigen literarischen Verhältnisse wird diese Legende nach wie vor von vielen als "unerfindbar" und deswegen im Kern historisch glaubwürdig angesehen — zumindest eine "Erinnerung" soll in ihr bewahrt sein, an des Propheten Ausweisung und seinen "bürgerlichen Beruf" ³⁸. Wie schon bei den Visionen, so wird auch hieran ein exegetischer Methodenkonflikt offenbar. Zur Diskussion steht, welche Gewichtung der Überlieferungsgeschichtlichen Methode im Verhältnis zu Literar- und Redaktionskritik zukommt. Doch auch diese Frage stellt nur die

³⁵ LEVIN, "Amos und Jerobeam I", 257.

³⁶ Vgl. AULD, *Amos*, 28.

³⁷ AULD, *Amos*, 29.

³⁸ Vgl. SCHMIDT, "Amazja-Erzählung", 231, 228. Steiner vermag es sogar, des historischen Propheten Sykomorenhaine zu lokalisieren. Vgl. R.C. STEINER, *Stockmen from Tekoa, Sycomores from Sheba. A Study of Amos' Occupations* (CBQ.MS 36; Washington, DC 2003) 101.

Vorderseite eines hermeneutischen Grundproblems dar: Ist der Text auf eine vorliterarische Wirklichkeit hin transparent zu machen oder ist er primär selbst als geschichtlich gewachsene, theologisch-literarische Entität wahrzunehmen? Im konkreten Fall heißt das: Führt die Beobachtung, dass die Berufsbezeichnungen in Am 7,14 singulär und rätselhaft sind, zu der Folgerung, eben deswegen hier den “historischen Amos” greifen zu können, oder bilden die Beobachtungen zu den literarischen Verknüpfungen und Bezügen des ganzen Abschnitts den Ausgangspunkt, von dem aus die Einzelzüge erklärt werden müssen? Der Maulbeerfeigenritzer (בֹּלֵם שְׁקִמִּים) ließe sich dann als Bezug zur vierten Vision deuten (s. u.), der Rinderhirt (בֹּקֵר) hätte dann womöglich eher die “Baschanskühe” (פְּרוֹת הַבָּשָׂן) von 4,1 im Blick, als dass sich hier alte Überlieferungen an den Brotberuf eines “historischen Amos” erhalten hätten.

III. אֶנֶךְ — Die *crux* in Am 7,7-8

Allerdings wirft eine Entscheidung zugunsten der literarischen Argumentation und gegen die überlieferungsgeschichtliche Spekulation natürlich die Frage auf, warum jemand diese “unerfindbare” Geschichte in das Prophetenbuch hätte hineinschreiben sollen. Sie lässt sich meiner Meinung nach mit einem erneuten Blick auf die dritte Vision und das bislang unübersetzt gebliebene Wort אֶנֶךְ beantworten. Bekanntlich liegt mit ihm ein *hapax legomenon* vor, und das macht es schwer zu sagen, worum es sich dabei eigentlich handelt. Die klassische Übersetzung ist “Blei” im Sinne eines “Bleilots”, also Senkbleis, und nach Martha Campos geht sie auf die sephardischen Rabbinen des zehnten Jahrhunderts, genauer: auf Ibn Quraysh und Rashi zurück, die sie aus dem Arabischen herleiteten³⁹, Noonan findet sie bereits bei Ephraim dem Syrer⁴⁰. Demnach sieht Amos JHWH auf einer “Bleilotmauer” stehen, also auf einer Mauer, die mit einem Bleilot ausgerichtet oder auszurichten ist —

³⁹ Vgl. M.E. CAMPOS, “Structure and Meaning in the Third Vision of Amos (7:7-17)”, *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 11 (2011) 1-21, 19.

⁴⁰ Vgl. B.J. NOONAN, “There and Back Again: “Tin” or “Lead” in Amos 7:7-9?”, *VT* 63 (2013) 299-307, 301.

das kann man im Hebräischen so ausdrücken ⁴¹ — mit einem ebensolchen Werkzeug in der Hand, das er, so die Deutung, auch an Israel anzulegen gedenke. Nach wie vor ist das insofern keine schlechte Übersetzung, als sie zumindest einen nachvollziehbaren Sinn ergibt. Das ist bei einigen der zahlreichen Verbesserungsvorschläge nicht unbedingt der Fall ⁴²: Seit den keilschriftlichen Entdeckungen Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts wird אֲנַךְ meist als Lehnwort ⁴³ des akkadischen *AN.NA* | *annaku* aufgefasst. Das überzeugt sofort, hat allerdings den Haken, dass man auch von *AN.NA* | *annaku* nur weiß, dass es sich um irgendein Nichteisenmetall, wahrscheinlich um Zinn handelt ⁴⁴. Noonan betont nun freilich wieder, “[that] the term annaku could denote different metals” ⁴⁵.

1. Die Interpretation von אֲנַךְ als “Zinn”

Was aber heißt es nun, Gott auf einer Mauer aus Zinn (oder einem anderen Buntmetall) stehen zu sehen, Zinn (oder ein anderes Buntmetall) in der Hand haltend? Die Interpretationen sind vielfältig, die beliebteste ist jedoch, Zinn als wichtigen Rohstoff für die Bronzeherstellung zu betrachten, die ihrerseits den wichtigsten Grundstoff für die Waffenproduktion dargestellt habe. JHWH zeige also mit seiner Zinnmauer, dass er über einen quasi unbegrenzten Vorrat an waffenfähigem Material verfüge, das er gegen sein Volk einzusetzen gedenke ⁴⁶. Das wäre dann eine ziemlich raffinierte

⁴¹ Vgl. H. WILLIAMSON, “The Prophet and the Plumb-Line. A Redaction-Critical Study of Amos vii”, *In Quest of the Past. Studies on Israelite Religion, Literature and Prophetism* (ed. A.S. VAN DER WOUDE) (OTS 26; Leiden 1990) 101-121, 112, mit Verweis auf das “mit glühenden Steinen geröstete Brot” (עֵנֶת רֶצֶפִים) von 1 Kön 19,6.

⁴² Vgl. für die Diskussion der letzten 150 Jahre M. WEIGL, “Eine ‘unendliche Geschichte’: אֲנַךְ (Am 7,7-8)”, *Bib* 76 (1995) 343-387; W. BEYERLIN, *Bleilot, Brecheisen oder was sonst? Revision einer Amos-Vision* (OBO 81; Fribourg – Göttingen 1988).

⁴³ Gegen die These vom Lehnwort und für ein gemein vorderorientalisches Wort ähnlicher Bedeutung “in Semitic and non-Semitic” argumentiert nun NOONAN, “There and Back Again”, 303.

⁴⁴ Vgl. WEIGL, “unendliche Geschichte”, 343-357.

⁴⁵ NOONAN, “There and Back Again”, 303.

⁴⁶ Vgl. u. a. G. BRUNET, “La vision de l’étain: Réinterprétation d’Amos VII 7-9”, *VT* 16 (1966) 387-395, 394-395.

Vision, die über zwei Ecken führte: **אֵנֶךְ**, Zinn, verwies symbolisch auf etwas (Bronze), das selbst noch symbolisch zu interpretieren wäre (Waffengewalt), es wäre quasi das Symbol eines Symbols. Überzeugender sind die Vorschläge Beyerlins und Uehlingers, die als Vergleichstexte andere metallene (Stadt-)mauern heranziehen, die erzene aus Jer 1,18; 15,20 und die eiserne aus Ez 4,3 und 2 Makk 11,9, wobei das Material für erhöhte Stabilität, also für eine Steigerung der Schutzfunktion stehe. Gott stehend auf einer solchen Mauer illustriere dann entweder die angenommene traditionelle Bewahrungstheologie (so Beyerlin)⁴⁷ oder deren Aufhebung im Strafgericht (so Uehlinger mit Verweis auf die altbabylonische Darstellung einer Göttin über einer Stadtmauer und “die Ambivalenz von ‘Zinn’”⁴⁸ als einem sehr weichen Werkstoff und dessen literarische Verwendung im Vasallitätsvertrag Asarhaddons)⁴⁹.

Doch unabhängig davon, ob man **אֵנֶךְ** als “Blei” oder als “Zinn” versteht — das Problem beider Übersetzungen bleibt, dass es dafür durchaus bekannte hebräische Wörter gibt, nämlich **עופרת** und **בדיל**⁵⁰. Warum wird dann hier auf das akkadische Lehnwort rekuriert?

2. Ein Wortspiel mit **אֵנֶךְ**?

Nicht zuletzt aufgrund dieser Frage gehen andere bei der Deutung von der vierten Vision aus, in der mit der Assonanz von **קִיץ** (Sommerobst) und **קֵץ** (Ende) gearbeitet wird, und vermuten auch in der dritten ein wie auch immer geartetes Wortspiel. So lasse das gesehene **אֵנֶךְ** das Wort für “Ich”, **אֲנִי**, assoziieren: “Siehe ich will das Ich mitten in mein Volk Israel stellen”⁵¹, so Praetorius (1915). Ein anderer Vorschlag dieser Art verweist auf den Gleichklang mit

⁴⁷ Vgl. BEYERLIN, *Bleilot*, 46.

⁴⁸ C. UEHLINGER, “Der Herr auf der Zinnmauer. Zur dritten Amos-Vision (Am. vii 7-8)”, *BN* 48 (1989) 89-104, 101; vgl. PAUL, *Amos*, 235.

⁴⁹ Vgl. C. UEHLINGER, “Der Herr auf der Zinnmauer”, 102.

⁵⁰ Vgl. WILLIAMSON, “Plumb-Line”, 111.

⁵¹ F. PRAETORIUS, “Anmerkungen zu Amos”, *ZAW* 35 (1915) 12-25, 23; vgl. auch K. BALTZER, “Bild und Wort: Erwägungen zu der Vision des Amos in Am 7,7-9”, *Text, Methode und Grammatik*. Festschrift Wolfgang Richter (eds. W. GROSS – H. IRSIGLER – T. SEIDL) (St. Ottilien 1991) 11-16; JEREMIAS, *Prophet Amos*, 103.

den Verbwurzeln אנח oder אנק , die “seufzen” oder “stöhnen” bedeuten⁵² — eine These, die jüngst von Novick mit dem Hinweis auf mögliche nordisraelitische Dialektformen wieder aufgegriffen wird⁵³. Ob Amos dann Zinn oder Blei oder ein Bleilot sieht, verliert damit ein wenig an Relevanz. Wichtig ist, was es bedeuten soll.

3. Die antiken Übersetzungen von אנך

Die Frage nach dem אנך ist offensichtlich nicht erst eine moderne, das zeigt der Blick in die antiken Übersetzungen. Die Septuaginta beispielsweise ahnt darin etwas sehr hartes, unüberwindbares und übersetzt $\alpha\delta\acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\varsigma$, ein Material, aus dem, wie Hartmut Gese zeigt, in der griechischen Mythologie auch die Mauern des Tartaros bestehen⁵⁴. Hieronymus deutet in der Vulgata die Belege unterschiedlich: Zunächst steht der Herr *super murum litum*, “über einer verputzten Mauer”, in seiner Hand hält er dann, man möchte sagen: zunftgemäß, eine *trulla cementarii*, eine Maurerkelle, die er in das Volk legen möchte — warum auch immer. Hier dürften die griechischen Rezensionen, insbesondere Aquila hereingespielt haben: Dieser hat für das erste אנך $\gamma\alpha\nu\omega\nu\tau\alpha$ und für das zweite $\gamma\alpha\nu\omega\varsigma$ (nach dem Kommentar des Hieronymus) bzw. $\sigma\tau\iota\lambda\beta\omega\varsigma$ (nach der Syrohexapla), spricht also von einer verputzten, polierten bzw. verzinnnten Mauer und von Politur, Anstreich- oder Verzinnmaterial in JHWHs Hand, während Theodotion es in beiden Fällen mit $\tau\eta\kappa\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$, “geschmolzen”, wiedergibt⁵⁵. Bemerkenswert ist immerhin, dass die Konnotation des Bildes hier eher eine konstruktive als eine destruktive zu sein scheint. Der Wiederaufbau der zerfallenen Hütte Davids, wie ihn Am 9,11

⁵² Vgl. F. HORST, “Die Visionsschilderungen der alttestamentlichen Propheten”, *EvTh* 20 (1960) 193-205, 201; J. OUELLETTE, “Le mur d’étain dans Amos VII, 7-9”, *RB* 80 (1973) 321-331, 329-330.

⁵³ T. NOVICK, “Duping the Prophet: On אנך (Amos 7.8b) and Amos’s Visions”, *JSOT* 33 (2008) 115-128, 124-126; vgl. auch ANDERSEN – FREEDMAN, *Amos*, 756-759. Andersen und Freedman sprechen sich dafür aus, dass אנך an jeder Belegstelle etwas anderes bedeuten solle und bilden so eine Synthese aus antiken und modernen Deutungen.

⁵⁴ Vgl. H. GESE, “Komposition bei Amos” [1980], *Alttestamentliche Studien* (ed. H. GESE) (Tübingen 1991) 94-115, 100-101, Anm. 18 mit Verweis auf Vergil, *Aeneis* 6,548-550.

⁵⁵ vgl. ZIEGLER, *Duodecim Prophetae*, 198). Vgl. dazu BRUNET, “Vision”, 387-388, Anm. 6.

verheißt, mag hier bereits anklingen. Die aramäische Fassung des Targum Jonathan schließlich scheint bereits ganz von der impliziten (und wenig heilvollen) Deutung des Bildes her zu kommen: Amos sieht JHWH *על שור דדין וקדמוהי דין*, „auf einer Mauer des Gerichts, und vor ihm: Gericht“. Der Begriff der Vision wird hier geradezu transzendiert. Eine „Gerichtsmauer“, das ist nichts mehr, was man tatsächlich „sehen“ oder sich vorstellen könnte.

Es ist eindeutig: Schon zu Zeiten der antiken Übersetzer wusste man nicht mehr sicher, was *אֵלֹהִים* oder was ein *אֵלֹהִים* genau sein sollte. Von diesem Befund aber ist es nur noch ein kleiner Schritt zu der Vermutung, dass es den letzten Ergänzern des Amosbuches wenige Jahre vorher womöglich durchaus ähnlich ergangen sein könnte. Auch ihnen könnte bereits der ursprünglich einmal intendierte Sinn des Schlüsselwortes der dritten Vision verborgen gewesen sein. Und auch sie sahen sich genötigt, eine kreative Deutung dafür beizubringen. Genau hierin sehe ich das Motiv und die Intention unserer Amazja-Episode. Sie erläutert in erzählender Weise, was es bedeutet, dass JHWH ein *אֵלֹהִים* in die Mitte seines Volkes Israel legt. Dabei dürfte sie nicht einmal den ersten Versuch einer Interpretation von *אֵלֹהִים* darstellen, der uns überliefert ist, sondern auf jeden Fall den zweiten, vielleicht sogar den dritten.

IV. Interpretationen von *אֵלֹהִים* in Am 7,9; 9,1 und 7,10-17

Bereits der sekundäre Vers 7,9 nämlich lässt sich in diesem Sinne verstehen. „Ich werde mit dem Schwert aufstehen“ — in diesem Sinne ist also *אֵלֹהִים* tatsächlich eine Waffe in der Hand Gottes, ganz ähnlich, wie es die moderne, oben erwähnte Zinn-Bronze-Waffen-Exegese für den Grundtext annimmt.

1. Eine ältere Textschicht in der dritten Vision (Am 7,7-9)?

Eine weitere Interpretation ist meiner Meinung nach in der fünften Amosvision zu sehen, die in Kapitel 9 vorliegt und die, wie Waschke gezeigt hat, insgesamt den Charakter einer Ergänzung des viergliedrigen Visionenzyklus trägt ⁵⁶. Freilich ist auch dies nicht

⁵⁶ Vgl. E.-J. WASCHKE, „Die fünfte Vision des Amosbuches (9,1-4) — eine Nachinterpretation“, *ZAW* 106 (1994) 434-445, 443-444).

gängiger Konsens. Steins etwa rechnet im Kern der dritten und fünften Vision „noch mit Fragmenten einer älteren Textschicht“⁵⁷, gegenüber der die Visionen 1, 2 und 4, die im Unterschied zu den beiden anderen jahreszeitlich geprägt seien, eine jüngere Stufe darstellten. Steins stützt sich auf Beobachtungen Berglers, die dieser anführt, um die dritte Vision literarkritisch abzuheben, wobei für ihn allerdings die literarische Priorität den Visionen 1, 2 und 4 zukommt⁵⁸. Beider Argumente sind von unterschiedlichem Gewicht, *in toto* jedoch nicht ohne weiteres von der Hand zu weisen. Der Umstand, „daß sich die 5. ausschließlich auf die 3. Vision rückbezieht“⁵⁹, spricht jedoch m. E. wesentlich stärker für einen Interpretationszusammenhang als für eine ursprüngliche Zusammengehörigkeit: Die fünfte Vision kommentiert die dritte und legt sie aus. Wollte man tatsächlich literarkritisch einen ältesten Kern der Amosvisionen eruieren, so wäre dieser wohl im Grundbestand der dritten Vision (7,7-8abα) zu suchen. Dieser Kern weiß nichts von einer prophetischen Fürbitte, sie sei erfolgreich oder abgelehnt, vermutlich ebensowenig von einer absoluten Gerichtsankündigung, wohl aber etwas von dräuendem Unheil. Darüber hinaus betreffen auch die von Becker festgestellten Bezüge innerhalb wie außerhalb des Amosbuches ausschließlich die Visionen 1, 2 und 4. So könnte „allenfalls die dritte Anspruch auf Authentizität erheben“⁶⁰. Gleichwohl findet sich die Wendung „mein Volk Israel“ (עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל) tatsächlich nur in Texten, die nicht eben zum ältesten Bestand des Alten Testaments gehören (vgl. 1 Sam 9,16; 2 Sam 3,18; 7,11; 1 Kön 6,13; 8,16; 14,7; 16,2; Jer 7,12; 30,3; Ez 14,9; 25,14; 36,12; 38,14.16; 39,7; Am 7,8.15; 8,2; 9,14; Dan 9,20; 1 Chr 11,2; 17,7.10; 2 Chr 6,5.6; vgl. auch Ex 3,10; 5,1; 7,4; 12,31; 2 Sam 5,2; 7,7.8; 1 Kön 8,43; Jes 1,3; Jer 12,14; 23,2.13; Ez 34,30; Joel 4,2; Ps 50,7; 81,9.14; 1 Chr 17,6; 2 Chr 6,33) und „setzt ein

⁵⁷ STEINS, *Gericht*, 67.

⁵⁸ Vgl. S. BERGLER, „Auf der Mauer — auf dem Altar. Noch einmal die Visionen des Amos“, *VT* 50 (2000) 445-471.

⁵⁹ BERGLER, „Auf der Mauer“, 454, Hervorhebung Bergler.

⁶⁰ H. SPIECKERMANN, „Konzeption und Vorgeschichte des Stellvertretungsgedankens im Alten Testament“ [1995], *Gottes Liebe zu Israel*. Studien zur Theologie des Alten Testaments (ed. H. SPIECKERMANN) (FAT 33; Tübingen 2001) 141-153, 147; vgl. R. FELDMEIER – H. SPIECKERMANN, *Der Gott der Lebendigen*. Eine biblische Gotteslehre (Topoi Biblischer Theologie 1; Tübingen 2011) 317.

besonderes, geistlich-religiöses Treueverhältnis zwischen Jahwe und seinem Volk voraus (vgl. Am. iii 2), das [...] den Bundesgedanken impliziert”⁶¹. Damit wäre auch der potentiell älteste Kern schwerlich in das achte Jahrhundert zu datieren — oder aber in ihm ein früher Keim späterer Bundestheologie erhalten.

2. Eine ältere Textschicht in der fünften Vision (Am 9,1-4)

Innerhalb der fünften Vision selbst sind die literarischen Verhältnisse nicht einfach zu bestimmen. Bergler sieht den Kern lediglich in “(Teilen von) V. 1”⁶² — Wöhrle behandelt 9,1-6 (sic!) als Einheit⁶³. Weimar plädiert für “9,1aαβ+b und 4b”⁶⁴. Ich halte Steins’ Modifikation dieser Ansicht mit einem Grundbestand in 9,1aα.4b für plausibel⁶⁵, den Teilvers 9,1aα₂ (וִירַעְשׁוּ הַסַּפִּימִים, “und die Schwellen sollen beben”) freilich für diskutabel. Er unterbricht scheinbar mit einem Subjektswechsel und einer Imperfekt-Konsekutivform die beiden an den Propheten gerichteten Imperative הָךְ und וּבִצְעָם. Deshalb könnte man überlegen, ob hier durch die Einfügung der “bebenden Schwellen” nach Jes 6,4 (dort mit dem Verb נִירַע in Aufnahme des “Bebens” (רַעַשׁ) von Am 1,1 durch eine weitere Hand das Setting an Jesaja 6 angeglichen worden sei. Auch das Suffix der dritten Person Plural, das sich im vorliegenden Text eindeutig auf die “Schwellen” bezieht, mag irritieren, da diese im Hebräischen in der Regel ebensowenig Köpfe haben wie im Deutschen. Anders sieht es aus, wenn damit die “oberen Deckenquerbalken”⁶⁶ gemeint sind. Dem widerspricht freilich Hartenstein: “Das Architekturelement סָף [...] bezieht sich deutlich auf die unteren Schwellen eines Eingangs”⁶⁷. Ohne den fraglichen Achtelvers fehlte dem Vers freilich

⁶¹ BECKER, “Fürbitter”, 156.

⁶² BERGLER, “Mauer”, 469; vgl. D.U. ROTTZOLL, *Studien zur Redaktion und Komposition des Amosbuchs* (BZAW 243; Berlin – New York 1996) 104.

⁶³ WÖHRLE, *Die frühen Sammlungen*, 114-116.

⁶⁴ P. WEIMAR, “Der Schluß des Amos-Buches. Ein Beitrag zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Amos-Buches”, *BN* 16 (1981) 60-100, 67; vgl. auch WILLI-PLEIN, *Vorformen*, 52-54.

⁶⁵ Vgl. STEINS, *Gericht*, 68.

⁶⁶ BERGLER, “Mauer”, 451, u. a. mit Verweis auf Zeph 2,14.

⁶⁷ F. HARTENSTEIN, *Die Unzugänglichkeit Gottes im Heiligtum*. Jesaja 6 und der Wohnort JHWHs in der Jerusalemer Kulttradition (WMANT 75; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1997) 123.

eine Größe, auf die sich die Pluralsuffixe von 9,1aß rückbeziehen könnten.

Eindeutiger liegen die Dinge dagegen beim ebenfalls mit konsekutivem Perfekt angefügten letzten Viertelvers 9,1bß. Hier ist der Subjektswechsel nicht bloß ein scheinbarer. Als möglicher Kern der fünften Amosvision ergibt sich damit:

9,1 Ich sah den Herrn, stehend auf dem Altar, und er sprach:
Schlage auf das Kapitell, (so dass die Schwellen beben), und
schneide sie alle am Kopf ab ⁶⁸ [...]

9,4 und ich will meine Augen auf sie legen zum Üblen und nicht
zum Guten.

Wieder steht der Herr auf etwas, diesmal aber nicht auf einer **אֵי**-Mauer, sondern auf dem Altar — die Deutung der dritten Vision auf die "Heiligtümer Israels" von 7,9 taucht hier wieder auf. Sie wird, unter spürbarer Einwirkung unter anderem von Jesaja 6 ⁶⁹, gewissermaßen revisualisiert, aus der Interpretation in die Vision zurückgeholt. Anders als in den ersten vier Schauungen ergeht ein direkter Befehl. Sinnvollerweise kann er an niemanden anders gerichtet sein als an den angesprochenen Propheten und nicht an einen "ungenannten Engel" ⁷⁰, denn ein solcher "hätte doch wohl eingeführt werden müssen" ⁷¹. Er soll "schlagen" — hebräisch **נָכַח**, das heißt mit Bergler, er "ist jetzt Sehender und Handelnder zugleich, YHWHs Handlanger und Gerichtsvollstrecker in einer konzertierten Aktion" ⁷². Zu diesem Zweck bekomme er von JHWH aus der dritten Vision "den 'anāk [...] zum Zuschlagen" ⁷³, worin offenbar wieder ein Destruktionswerkzeug, "z.B. als zinnerne Keule vorgestellt" ⁷⁴, gesehen wird — eine amosbuchinterne Interpretation, wie sie für Amos 7 selbst auch bereits im 10. Jahrhundert begegnet: Nach

⁶⁸ Die schwierige Lesart wird von LXX gestützt: διακόψον εἰς κεφαλὰς πάντων.

⁶⁹ Vgl. BECKER, "Fürbitter", 147; DERS., *Jesaja — von der Botschaft zum Buch* (FRLANT 178; Göttingen 1997) 91, Anm. 104.

⁷⁰ GESE, "Komposition", 103.

⁷¹ JEREMIAS, *Prophet Amos*, 124.

⁷² BERGLER, "Mauer", 451.

⁷³ BERGLER, "Mauer", 460.

⁷⁴ BERGLER, "Mauer", 459.

Campos findet sich die Idee, אֵיךְ von נִכָּה abzuleiten, bereits bei Menachen ben Saruq⁷⁵.

Ein אֵיךְ inmitten des Volkes zu legen (Wurzel שִׂים) heißt dann nach 9,4b, mit einem Zitat aus Jer 21,10, dass JHWH seine Augen auf sie legen wird, (Wurzel שִׂים), und zwar zum Üblen und nicht zum Guten. Beyerlin bestimmt freilich die Richtung dieser Abhängigkeit umgekehrt, da Am 9,4b "alt genug"⁷⁶, bei Jer 21,10a dagegen "späteres, nachjeremianisches Zutun"⁷⁷ anzunehmen sei. Im Lichte der oben angestellten literarkritischen Erwägungen zu Am 9 verliert diese Argumentation mit dem fraglos hohen Alter von Am 9,4b allerdings ein gutes Stück ihrer Evidenz.

In Ezechiel 9 schließlich wird womöglich die ganze Szene — eingeschlossen der prophetischen Fürbitte der vorhergehenden Visionen! — aufgenommen. Auch hier beginnt die Zerstörung beim Heiligtum, nun liegen die Schlagwerkzeuge dafür allerdings nicht mehr in der Hand des Propheten, sondern von sechs Männern (Ez 9,2)⁷⁸.

Mehrere Fortschreibungen innerhalb der fünften Amosvision lassen diese Deutung vom אֵיךְ und mit ihr die Gestalt des Propheten später wieder in den Hintergrund treten. So nimmt mit V. 1bβ JHWH in einer Weiterführung von 7,9 das Heft wieder selbst in die Hand: "und ihren Rest werde ich mit dem Schwert totschiagen". Das Suffix der dritten Person Maskulinum Plural von כָּלֵם wird so von den "Schwellen" bzw. Querbalken wie schon in V. 4b auf eine Personengruppe bezogen, der nun aber dezidiert kein Rest bleiben soll. VV. 2-4a schließlich erläutern, an Psalm 139 gemahnend⁷⁹, dass dem an keinem Ort und auf keine Weise zu entgehen sein werde. V. 4aβ nimmt dabei die Stichworte הָרֶג und הָרַב von 1aβ wieder auf.

⁷⁵ Vgl. CAMPOS, "Structure", 17.

⁷⁶ W. BEYERLIN, *Reflexe der Amosvisionen im Jeremiabuch* (OBO 93; Fribourg – Göttingen 1989) 82.

⁷⁷ BEYERLIN, *Reflexe*, 80.

⁷⁸ Vgl. dazu BERGLER, "Mauer", 463.

⁷⁹ Vgl. WASCHKE, "fünfte Vision", 444.

3. “Le אֲנִי, c’est moi!”

Die Rolle des Propheten dagegen wird in der Amazjalegende ausgeführt und weitergedacht. Am 7,9 deutete אֲנִי als “Schwert”, 9,1 gab es dem Propheten als destruktives Schlagwerkzeug selbst in die Hand, und über diese Brücke ist man in 7,10-17 nun beim “Propheten als Bleilot” angekommen. Für die dritte Vision selbst sei diese Deutung dahingestellt, aber hier, im Erzähltext, wird die von Praetorius in die Diskussion um אֲנִי eingebrachte Assoziation tatsächlich im Text greifbar: “Nicht ein Prophet bin ich (אֲנִי), und kein Prophetenjünger bin ich (אֲנִי), sondern ein Hirt bin ich (אֲנִי) und ein Maulbeerfeigenritzer”⁸⁰. Amos könnte auch sagen: “Le אֲנִי, c’est moi”. Es geht nicht oder zumindest nicht direkt um das göttliche Ich (so Praetorius)⁸¹, sondern um das Ich des Propheten⁸². Er ist das אֲנִי “inmitten des Hauses Israel”, wie es Amazja gegenüber Jerobeam in V. 10 ganz richtig bemerkt. Der Priester will es entfernt wissen, und indem er dies gegenüber Amos ausspricht (“nicht länger fahre fort zu prophezeien”), vollzieht er genau die Absicht Gottes, die er mit dem Legen des אֲנִי ausgedrückt haben wollte: “Nicht länger werde ich fortfahren, vorüberzugehen”. Amazja wird zum Exekutor der Vision. Indem er Amos zurückweist, präsentiert er sich zum einen als die personifizierte Unbußfertigkeit, die bestraft wird. In Amos wendet er sich nicht einfach gegen einen “Seher”, sondern gegen das Wort Gottes, und umgekehrt erscheint der Prophet selbst als Verkörperung dieses Wortes. Zum anderen zeigt sich darin aber auch, dass die Ablehnung des Propheten von Gott bereits in dessen Sendung einkalkuliert und intendiert war. Der Prophet nennt sich einen “Maulbeerfeigenritzer”. In der vierten Vision sieht er dann bekanntlich einen Korb mit “Sommerobst” (קִיץ), der von Gott dahingehend gedeutet wird, dass das “Ende” (קֵץ) für Israel gekommen sei. “Sommerobst”, das sind nicht zuletzt Maulbeerfeigen (*Ficus sycomorus*), deren Reifungs-

⁸⁰ Zur präsentischen Übersetzung dieses Nominalsatzes vgl. E. GASS, “Kein Prophet bin ich und kein Prophetenschüler bin ich”. Zum Selbstverständnis des Propheten Amos in Am 7,14”, *ThZ* 68 (2012) 1-24, 13-19.

⁸¹ Vgl. PRAETORIUS, “Anmerkungen”, 23.

⁸² Dass in Am 7,10-17 Amos als אֲנִי gedeutet werde, findet sich erstmals wohl bei WILLIAMSON, “Plumb-Line”, 116. Er rechnet gleichwohl noch damit, hier ein einstmal selbständiges Traditionsstück vorfinden zu können.

prozess durch Anritzen beschleunigt wird⁸³. Im Geschick von Amos vollzieht sich also der Wille Gottes zum Gericht, und der Prophet wirkt geradezu als dessen Katalysator. Er soll nicht etwa als "letzte Rettungsmöglichkeit"⁸⁴ zur Buße aufrufen oder warnen, sondern durch sein Prophetsein das Gericht herbeiführen. Auch hier, wie bei der fünften Vision, wird man stark an Jesaja 6 erinnert, allerdings nicht mehr an die Schauung selbst, sondern an den Verstöckungsauftrag aus Jes 6,10⁸⁵.

Es geht also der kleinen Legende nicht nur darum, ein schwieriges Wort zu erklären. Sie ist vielmehr eine theologische Reflexion über die Rolle des Propheten schlechthin und das Wirken Gottes in der Welt, die sich an einem philologischen Problem entzündet. Diese Methode, die Schrift im Rahmen einer Geschichte narrativ auszulegen, indem man auf ein ähnlich klingendes oder ähnlich geschriebenes Wort zurückgreift, zählt bekanntlich zu den literarischen Mitteln des Midrasch, genauer: des Midrasch Aggada⁸⁶. Es ist eine Methode der rabbinischen Exegese, aber sie findet sich, man möchte sagen: natürlich, auch schon innerhalb des Neuen und des Alten Testaments: "Thus the rabbinic midrash is only an intensification and development of processes and modes already found in the Bible"⁸⁷.

V. Fazit und Konsequenzen

Diese Interpretation der Amazja-Erzählung als Interpretation der dritten Vision illustriert: Die Person des Propheten steht nicht am Anfang, sondern am Ende der literarischen Entwicklung der Pro-

⁸³ Vgl. WOLFF, *Joel und Amos*, 368; PAUL, *Amos*, 248.

⁸⁴ So J. JEREMIAS, "Die Rolle des Propheten nach dem Amosbuch", *Hosea und Amos. Studien zu den Anfängen des Dodekapropheten* (ed. J. JEREMIAS) (FAT 13; Tübingen 1996) 272-284, 279.

⁸⁵ Zum Verstöckungsauftrag vgl. BECKER, *Jesaja*, 81-82.

⁸⁶ Zum Midrasch-Begriff vgl. A. SHINAN – Y. ZAKOVITCH, "Midrash on Scripture and Midrash within Scripture", *Studies in Bible* (ed. S. JAPHET) (Scripta Hierosolymitana 31; Jerusalem 1986) 257-277, 258. Am 7,10-17 wird auch von Kratz als "theologischer Midrasch" bezeichnet (KRATZ, "Worte", 314).

⁸⁷ SHINAN – ZAKOVITCH, "Midrash", 262.

phetenbücher⁸⁸. Dies wurde für Amos versucht zu zeigen, am deutlichsten zu sehen ist es vielleicht bei Jona, es gilt jedoch gleichermaßen für Jesaja und Jeremia. Am Anfang steht das Wort. Erst im Verlauf seiner immer wieder neuen Auslegung und Reformulierung "erschafft" es sich mehr und mehr eine Trägergestalt, die es in zunehmendem Maße verkörpert. Dies geschieht in scheinbar autobiographischen Texten ebenso wie in Legenden, die in der dritten Person gehalten sind. Die Gestalt des Amos, wie sie in dem nach ihm benannten biblischen Buch auftritt, ist als Ergebnis dieser Entwicklung eine Art Hypostase der theologischen Auseinandersetzung mit der prophetischen Überlieferung. Amos selbst ist daher weniger als historische Persönlichkeit greifbar denn als theologisch aufgeladene Person, deren Karriere diesseits der Grenzen des Kanons mitnichten abgeschlossen ist: Die "Vitae Prophetarum", mutmaßlich aus dem ersten nachchristlichen Jahrhundert⁸⁹, geben ein hervorragendes Beispiel dafür, wie aus der Lektüre der Schrift, als Midraschim, neue, theologisch hoch aufgeladene Prophetenbiographien erwachsen. Das kurze Stück über Amos weiß hier etwa, dass Amos von Amazja nicht nur ausgewiesen, sondern "oftmals auf dem Hinrichtungsblock geschlagen" ("πυκνῶς αὐτὸν τυμπαίνισας")⁹⁰ worden sei, ehe ihn am Ende dessen Sohn mit einer Keule (ρόπαλον)⁹¹ tödlich am Kopf verwundet habe. Nach Schwemer ist dieses ρόπαλον das für diese Hinrichtungsart typische "Schlaginstrument"⁹². Im Lichte des oben Diskutierten ließe sich jedoch erwägen, ob womöglich nicht auch hier eine Weiterführung der

⁸⁸ Vgl. U. BECKER, "Die Wiederentdeckung des Prophetenbuches. Tendenzen und Aufgaben der gegenwärtigen Prophetenforschung", *BThZ* 21 (2004) 30-60, 59; DERS., "Historisch-kritisch oder kanonisch? Methodische Zugänge in der Prophetenauslegung am Beispiel des Amos-Buches", *ThG* 54 (2011) 206-220.

⁸⁹ Vgl. A.M. SCHWEMER, *Studien zu den frühjüdischen Prophetenlegenden Vitae Prophetarum. Band I. Die Viten der großen Propheten Jesaja, Jeremia, Ezechiel und Daniel. Einleitung, Übersetzung und Kommentar* (TSAJ 49; Tübingen 1995) 68-69.

⁹⁰ Siehe A.M. SCHWEMER, *Studien zu den frühjüdischen Prophetenlegenden Vitae Prophetarum. Band II. Die Viten der kleinen Propheten und der Propheten aus den Geschichtsbüchern. Übersetzung und Kommentar* (TSAJ 50; Tübingen 1996) 33.

⁹¹ Vgl. SCHWEMER, *Studien*, 33, 37.

⁹² Vgl. SCHWEMER, *Studien*, 37.

יְהוָה-Deutung von Am 9,1 vorliegen könnte. Der Prophet bekäme dann in Am 9,1 die Schlagwaffe in die Hand, würde in Am 7,10-17 selbst mit ihr gleichgesetzt, um nach VitProph 7,1 schließlich durch eine solche das Martyrium zu erleiden.

Der "historische Amos", der am Anfang der kritischen Exegese zur Zeit der Aufklärung im Fokus des Interesses stand, entpuppt sich so als theologischer Amos, der freilich als solcher durch und durch geschichtlich verstanden werden will. Seine Entwicklung beginnt bei den "Worten des Amos von Tekoa", sie erstreckt sich über den langen Zeitraum der literarischen Genese des Zwölfprophetenbuches, und sie endet nicht an den späteren Kanongrenzen.

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SUMMARY

The prophetic narrative Am 7,10-17 is understood as a text written for its present context, viz. the visions of Amos. Its intention is to explain the enigmatic יְהוָה in the third vision. Having been the subject of interpretation already in Am 7,9 and 9,1aα.4b, this time the יְהוָה is identified with the person of the prophet himself. Amos, the יְהוָה, personifies the divine word. Therefore the text proves to be a Midrash which illustrates that inner-biblical exegesis and theology are closely related to each other in this particular case.

Der gebundene Starke (Mk 3,27) als markinisches Programm einer Umwertung der Werte

William Shakespeare widmet sich in seiner Tragödie *Macbeth* den verheerenden Folgen, die Ehrgeiz und Machtstreben auf den Menschen haben können. Dabei legt er offen, wie sich der Mensch in Sünde und Schuld verstrickt und damit die als gut und gesichert angesehene menschliche Lebensordnung, ja sogar die Natur aus den Fugen bringen kann. In *Macbeth* liegen der sichtbaren Welt übernatürlich böse und gute Kräfte zugrunde, die den Lauf der Dinge beeinflussen. Dazu gehören auch die drei unheimlichen Schwestern (Hexen), die gleich zu Anfang des Dramas die Bühne betreten und den Heerführer und Hauptprotagonisten Macbeth mit ihrer Weissagung, er sei jetzt Thane of Cawdor und werde zudem noch König, in die Irre führen (vgl. Act 1, Scene 3). Die Hexen offerieren Macbeth jedoch keine sichere, sondern eine unvollständige, ja verzerrte Zukunft. Zwar wird Macbeth Thane of Cawdor; sein Königsein wird jedoch nur dadurch Realität, dass er den bisherigen König Duncan gerade aufgrund dieser Prophezeiung ermordet. Insofern lässt sich Macbeth durch die zweideutigen Weissagungen der Hexen täuschen; das Gute, die Königswürde, ist nur um den Preis des abgrundtief Bösen, eines Mordes, zu erlangen. Damit sind alle Wertungen von gut und böse in ihr Gegenteil verkehrt. Dieser Rollentausch der Werte verdichtet sich am Ende der ersten Szene des ersten Aktes im Gesang der Schwestern: "*Fair is foul, and foul is fair*" (Gut ist böse, und böse ist gut!) ¹.

Diese Umkehrung der Werte, die bei Shakespeare eine Störung göttlich legitimer Natur- und Moralordnung anzeigt, begegnet vielfach in der menschlichen Literaturgeschichte, ja sogar in den Schriften des Neuen Testaments. Bester Beleg ist ein Jesuswort, das zuerst im Markusevangelium begegnet: Mk 3,27 (vgl. Mt

¹ Text zitiert nach *The Oxford Shakespeare. The Complete Works. Second Edition* (eds. J. JOWETT – W. MONTGOMERY – G. TAYLOR – S. WELLS) (Oxford – New York 2005) 969-994.

12,29; EvThom 35)². Es handelt sich um eines der rätselhafteren Worte Jesu, das nicht nur von einem Einbruch bzw. Raub berichtet, sondern auch die Grundbedingung für dessen Erfolg benennt:

ἀλλ' οὐ δύναται οὐδεὶς εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ ἰσχυροῦ εἰσελθὼν
τὰ σκεύη αὐτοῦ διαρπάσαι,
ἐὰν μὴ πρῶτον τὸν ἰσχυρὸν δήσῃ,
καὶ τότε τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ διαρπάσει.
*Doch nicht kann einer, in das Haus des Starken hineingehend,
seine Gefäße ausrauben,
wenn er nicht zuerst den Starken fesselte,
und dann wird er sein Haus ausrauben.*

Wer den Hausrat eines Hauses stehlen will, muss erst den Hausherrn unschädlich machen. Offensichtlich ist intendiert, dass dieses Verbrechen gelingt. Damit steht die in fast jeder Gesellschaft vertretene Wertung von kriminellen Tätern als böse und deren Opfern als gut zur Disposition. Wer sich mit diesem Vers beschäftigt, muss zunächst feststellen, dass sich das exegetische Interesse weniger auf seine Stellung im Markusevangelium als auf seine Relevanz für die historische Jesusforschung richtet. Wahrscheinlich handelt es sich um ein authentisches Jesuswort³, das der Verteidigung seines exorzistischen Wirkens dient. Diese Perspektive wird

² In Lk 11,21-22 findet sich eine ähnliche Überlieferung, welche jedoch auf eine Parallelüberlieferung in der Spruchquelle Q zurückgehen dürfte; vgl. H.T. FLEDDERMANN, *Mark and Q. A Study of the Overlap Texts* (BETHL 122; Leuven 1995) 41-55; R. LAUFEN, *Die Doppelüberlieferungen der Logienquelle und des Markusevangeliums* (BBB 54; Königstein – Bonn 1980) 126-149; zur Diskussion vgl. F. NEIRYNCK, "The Sayings Source Q and the Gospel of Mark", *Geschichte — Tradition — Reflexion III: Frühes Christentum*. FS M. Hengel (eds. H. CANIK – H. LICHTENBERGER – P. SCHÄFER) (Tübingen 1996) 125-145, hier 127-128.

³ Vgl. M. EBNER, *Jesus — ein Weisheitslehrer?* Synoptische Weisheitslogien im Traditionsprozess (HBS 15; Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1998), 371; G. THEISSEN – A. MERZ, *Der historische Jesus. Ein Lehrbuch* (Göttingen 2011) 237-238. Ein Höchstmaß an sachlicher Nähe zu Wirken und Verkündigung des historischen Jesus dürfte auf jeden Fall vorauszusetzen sein; vgl. auch W. SCHMITHALS, *Das Evangelium nach Markus I* (ÖTBK 2,1; Gütersloh – Würzburg 1986) 223.

im Markusevangelium übernommen, was wiederum durch den unmittelbaren Kontext nahegelegt wird (vgl. Mk 3,22-26) ⁴.

Im Gesamttrahmen des zweiten Evangeliums werfen Stellung und Funktion von Mk 3,27 jedoch deutliche Fragen auf. Ein Beleg für die Schwierigkeit einer Kommentierung findet sich im Markuskommentar von Dieter Lührmann. Mit Verweis auf die vorausgehenden VV. führt er aus: "Unklar ist die Fortsetzung in 27... 27 ist ein Bildwort, das sich in irgendeiner Weise auf Jesu Wirken beziehen muss, aber doch nur eine allgemeine Regel bietet, wie man es anstellen könne, einem Starken etwas wegzunehmen" ⁵. Die Unsicherheit, diesem Vers einen kontextbezogenen Sinn abzugewinnen, ist mit Händen greifbar. Andere Kommentatoren interpretieren Mk 3,27 völlig von den vorausgehenden Versen (Mk 3,22-26) her und setzen damit voraus, dass Jesu exorzistisches Wirken metaphorisch umschrieben werde ⁶. Jedoch zeigt schon das veränderte Wortfeld, dass eine Verbindung zu den vorausgehenden Versen nicht einfach herzustellen ist. Von den entscheidenden Lexemen aus Mk 3,27 finden sich nur οἰκία und δύνασθαι im vorausgehenden Kontext wieder (vgl. Mk 3,22-26). Die Lexeme σκεύη, διαρπάζειν und δεῖν werden hier zum ersten Mal im Markusevangelium erwähnt. Das Adjektiv ἰσχυρός findet sich zwar schon in Mk 1,7, dort allerdings als Charakterisierung Jesu (ἰσχυρότερος) im Gegenüber zu Johannes dem Täufer, der in Mk 3,27 keine Rolle spielt. Angesichts dieser Problematik ist es lohnend, der Funktion von Mk 3,27 im Markusevangelium nachzuspüren. Dazu bedarf es zunächst eines Blickes auf den engeren Kontext, in den der Evangelist diesen Vers eingebettet sehen wollte.

⁴ Vgl. hierzu EBNER, *Jesus*, 365-372. Dieser Kontextbezug findet sich gleicherweise in der mt Darstellung (vgl. Mt 12,29 im Kontext von Mt 12,22-30) und wird auch im Rahmen der lk Erzählung entsprechend aufgegriffen (vgl. Lk 11,21-22 mit Lk 11,14-20).

⁵ D. LÜHRMANN, *Das Markusevangelium* (HNT 3; Tübingen 1987) 76.

⁶ Vgl. u.a. P. DSCHULNIGG, *Das Markusevangelium* (ThKNT 2; Stuttgart 2007) 125; R.T. FRANCE, *The Gospel of Mark* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI – Cambridge 2002) 172.

I. Der Kontext — Mk 3,20-35

Mk 3,27 ist Teil des größeren Abschnitts Mk 3,20-35. Dieser dürfte insgesamt als literarische Einheit aufzufassen sein ⁷. Jesus, die Hauptperson der Gesamtszene, befindet sich in einem Haus ⁸ (Mk 3,20) und verbleibt dort offenkundig während des gesamten Geschehens (Mk 3,23.31-32.34) ⁹. Zeitsignale fehlen für den gesamten Abschnitt. Die Volksmenge ist jeweils als anwesend charakterisiert und damit als Zeugin der Ereignisse bestimmt (Mk 3,20.32). Die Anwesenheit der gerade berufenen zwölf Jünger Jesu (Mk 3,14-19) wird nur indirekt vermerkt (Mk 3,20: μή δύνασθαι αὐτοὺς μηδὲ ἄρτον φαγεῖν). Es finden sich zwei Gruppen von Gegenspielern Jesu, die Schriftgelehrten (Mk 3,22-30) und die Verwandten Jesu (Mk 3,21.31-35). Ihr Auftreten ist jedoch durch die typisch markinische Kompositionstechnik der Verschachtelung (sog. Sandwichtechnik) ineinander verschoben. Zunächst stehen die Verwandten Jesu im Fokus (Mk 3,21). Danach wird auf die Schriftgelehrten übergegangen (Mk 3,22-30), bevor schließlich zu den Verwandten Jesu zurückgeblendet wird (Mk 3,31-35) ¹⁰. Das gesamte Geschehen dient der Diskussion über Identität und Autorität Jesu, wobei zugleich das Thema der Zugehörigkeit zu Jesus angesprochen wird. Zentraler Schwerpunkt ist natürlich die Rede Jesu in Mk 3,23-29. Sowohl die Familie Jesu als auch die Schriftgelehrten äußern sich jedoch zuvor klar negativ über Jesu Identität und Autorität (Mk 3,21.22a.b).

⁷ Vgl. bes. O.I. OKO, "Who then is this?". A Narrative Study of the Role of the Question of the Identity of Jesus in the Plot of Mark's Gospel (BBB 148; Berlin – Wien 2004) 129-135.

⁸ Ob es sich um das Haus des Simon in Kafarnaum handelt (vgl. Mk 1,29), wird zwar diskutiert. Die unbestimmte Wendung εἰς οἶκον (vgl. auch Mk 2,1) lässt jedoch keine nähere Identifizierung zu; mit DSCHULNIGG, *Markusevangelium*, 121; anders SCHMITHALS, *Markus I*, 211.

⁹ An welchem Ort Jesus die Schriftgelehrten zu sich ruft (vgl. Mk 3,23), bleibt unbestimmt. Eine unmittelbare Konfrontation mit seinen Verwandten findet gar nicht erst statt, weil Jesus im Haus sitzen bleibt, während seine Verwandten draußen vor der Tür stehen bleiben (vgl. Mk 3,31-32.34).

¹⁰ Zur narrativen Funktion von Sandwich-Kompositionen vgl. D. DORMEYER, *Das Markusevangelium* (Darmstadt 2005) 146-147; T. SHEPHERD, "The Narrative Function of Markan Intercalation", *NTS* 41 (1995) 522-540.

Die Verwandten Jesu (οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ)¹¹ formulieren in Mk 3,21 den ersten Vorwurf: Er ist außer sich, d. h., er ist von Sinnen bzw. verrückt (ἐξέστη)¹². Damit beginnt der Evangelist ein Spiel mit Außen- und Innenperspektiven in Bezug zur Person Jesu. Jesus soll außer sich sein; dabei sind es die Angehörigen seines Familienverbandes, die draußen sind und bleiben (Mk 3,31-32). Zugehörigkeit zu Jesus definiert sich nunmehr anders: ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ (Mk 3,35). Zugleich kann jedoch auch gefragt werden: Wenn Jesus, geradezu wörtlich, aus sich heraus ist, wer ist dann in ihm?

Die Antwort geben die Jerusalemer Schriftgelehrten mit einem ersten Vorwurf: Βεελζεβοὺλ ἔχει (Mk 3,22a)¹³. In Jesus wohne der Fürst der Dämonen. Dieser handle, wenn Jesus exorzistisch tätig sei (Mk 3,22b: ἐν τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια). Nach dem Ende der Jesusrede in Mk 3,29 wird diese Kritik in variierender Form wiederholt, und zwar im Hinblick auf die Frage, von welchem πνεῦμα Jesus bestimmt sei. Dieses sei gleich Beelzebul negativ charakterisiert: πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον ἔχει (Mk 3,30). Insofern bleiben die Worte Jesu für seine Gegner ohne Plausibilität, da sie dämonischen Ursprungs seien. Damit begehen sie jene nicht vergebbare Lästerung εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον (Mk 3,29), weil sie sich dem Träger des heiligen Gottesgeistes (vgl. Mk 1,10-11) gegenüber verweigern.

¹¹ Die Wendung οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ ist als Identifizierung der Verwandten Jesu umstritten, weil diese im Evangelium überhaupt noch nicht erwähnt wurden. Alternativ könnte an die Zwölf gedacht werden (vgl. Mk 3,14-19); so bes. J. PAINTER, "When is a House not Home? Disciples and Family in Mark 3.13-15", *NTS* 45 (1999) 498-513, hier 504-508. Diese Lösung lässt sich jedoch kaum mit Mk 3,20 vereinbaren. Wenn sich die Jünger gerade mit Jesus im Haus befinden, wo sie von der Volksmenge gehindert werden, etwas zu essen, können sie kaum herausgehen, um Jesus zu holen. Mit οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ wird daher die Familie Jesu proleptisch eingeführt (vgl. Mk 3,31-35).

¹² Im Markusevangelium wird ἐξίστημι meist als Reaktion der Umstehenden auf Jesu Machttaten verwendet (vgl. Mk 2,12; 5,42; 6,51: Admirationsmotiv). Dieser Bezug ist in Mk 3,21 nicht gegeben. Daher ist von einem Urteil über Jesu Geisteszustand auszugehen; vgl. entsprechend auch Hos 9,7 LXX; Flavius Iosephus, *Ant.* 10:114.

¹³ Zu Herkunft und dämonischem Charakter des Βεελζεβοὺλ vgl. E.C.B. MACLAURIN, "Beelzeboul", *NT* 20 (1978) 156-160; W. HERRMANN, "Art. Baal Zebub", *DDD* (21999) 154-156. Zur Darstellung dämonischer Besessenheit mithilfe des Verbs ἔχειν vgl. auch Mk 5,15; 7,25; 9,17.

Bevor Jesus jedoch zu den Vorwürfen Stellung nehmen kann, folgt in Mk 3,22b die zweite Negativäußerung der Schriftgelehrten über ihn: Er sei mit dem Herrscher der Dämonen (ἄρχων τῶν δαιμονίων) im Bunde. Nur wer von dämonischer Macht profitiere, könne Dämonen bekämpfen. Jesu Exorzismen werden hier mithilfe des "Prinzip(s) homöopathischer Magie" diskreditiert, bei dem gilt: "Gleiches bekämpft Gleiches"¹⁴. Der Widerlegung gerade dieses Vorwurfs dient ein erster Teil der Replik Jesu in Mk 3,24-26. Die von weisheitlicher Erfahrung geleiteten Aussagen Jesu machen deutlich, dass ein Bündnis Jesu mit Satan (vgl. Mk 3,23)¹⁵, würde es tatsächlich existieren, zu dessen Ende führen würde¹⁶. Der innere Zusammenhalt seines Herrschaftsbereichs¹⁷ ginge durch eine Allianz mit Jesus verloren (Mk 3,24f). Die Folge wäre¹⁸: Satan würde sich dadurch selbst und dem von ihm bestimmten Lebensbereich katastrophalen Schaden zufügen (Mk 3,26). Falls Satan tatsächlich gegen sich aufgestanden wäre (ἀνέστη), hätte er jeden Stand verloren (οὐ δύναται στήναι) und damit schon jetzt sein Ende herbeigeführt (τέλος ἔχει). Dies wäre ein Zeichen endzeitlicher Vollendung (vgl. u. a. *AssMos* 10,1). Davon kann aber angesichts des weiter notwendigen exorzistischen Handelns Jesu keine Rede sein. Der Satan und seine dämonischen Helfershelfer führen keinen Krieg gegeneinander. Sie haben folglich noch kein τέλος gefunden. Ein Bündnis mit Jesus wäre für den Satan ein Handeln gegen die

¹⁴ W. FRITZEN, *Von Gott verlassen? Das Markusevangelium als Kommunikationsangebot für bedrängte Christen* (Stuttgart 2008) 217.

¹⁵ Zur Figur des Satans als Verkörperung widergöttlicher Macht vgl. W. FOERSTER, "Art. σατανᾶς", *ThWNT* (1964) VII, 151-164; O. BÖCHER, "Art. σατανᾶς", *EWNT* (32011) III, 558-559.

¹⁶ Das Konditionalgefüge in Mk 3,24f (ἐάν + Konjunktiv) verweist auf den hypothetischen Fall innerer Uneinigkeit eines Königreiches oder einer Familie; zum traditionsgeschichtlichen Hintergrund sowie möglichen Realien vgl. bes. EBNER, *Jesus*, 353-363.

¹⁷ Βασιλεία und οἰκία repräsentieren jeweils ein soziales Gefüge, wobei sowohl Makro- als auch Mikroebene sozialer Beziehungen angesprochen sind; vgl. auch R.A. GUELICH, *Mark 1:1 – 8:26* (WBC 34A; Nashville, TN – Dallas, TX – Mexico City – Rio de Janeiro 1989), 176. Οἰκία verweist nicht auf den Tempel in Jerusalem; gegen C. MYERS, *Binding the Strong Man. A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, NY 32011) 166.

¹⁸ Die Anwendung auf das in Mk 3,22b postulierte Satansbündnis Jesu erfolgt in Mk 3,26 als Konditionalgefüge im Realis (εἰ + Indikativ).

eigenen Interessen. Insofern sind die entsprechenden Vorwürfe der Schriftgelehrten (vgl. auch Mk 3,30) nicht nur völlig abwegig, sondern auch Ausdruck einer störrischen Jesusverweigerung mit heilsprekären Folgen (Mk 3,28-29).

Lassen sich damit sämtliche Passagen in Mk 3,20-35 den drei Vorwürfen gegenüber Jesus zuordnen, so gilt dies keineswegs für Mk 3,27. Zwar gibt es durch das Lexem οἰκία eine Anknüpfung an Mk 3,25. Zu beachten ist jedoch ein Perspektivwechsel. In Mk 3,25 dominiert die Innenperspektive, weil von der inneren Zerrissenheit des Hauses gesprochen wird. Mk 3,27 verweist dagegen auf ein Handeln, das von außen über ein Haus hereinbricht. "The imagery shifts ... from internal division to external attack ..." ¹⁹. Eine weitere Verbindung insbesondere zwischen Mk 3,24-26 und 3,27 ergibt sich durch das Verb δύνασθαι. Dieses deutet zumindest an, dass in diesen Versen gleicherweise Fragen der Macht und Mächtigkeit eine Rolle spielen. Nennen die Konditionalgefüge der VV. 24-26 in der Protasis Bedingungen, die in der Apodosis jeweils zu einem οὐ δύναται/δυνήσται (σταθῆναι) führen, so gilt das in V. 27 vorangestellte οὐ δύναται (διαπάσαι) nur dann, wenn die in der Protasis genannte Bedingung nicht (!) erfüllt wird (ἐὰν μὴ ... δῶσῃ). Dies belegt erneut den Perspektivwechsel, der mit V. 27 einhergeht ²⁰. Bestätigt wird dies zudem durch das V. 27 einleitende ἀλλά, welches die Einführung eines neuen Gedankens anzeigt, der sich vom bisher Ausgeführten deutlich absetzt ²¹.

Insgesamt ist festzuhalten, dass die Funktion von Mk 3,27 im Kontextgefüge von Mk 3,20-35 eher offenbleibt. Der Vers antwortet

¹⁹ J.R. DONAHUE – D. HARRINGTON, *The Gospel of Mark* (Sacra Pagina Series 2; Collegeville, MN 2002) 131.

²⁰ Kaum schlagend ist der Versuch, eine semantische Brücke zwischen Beelzebul und dem ἰσχυρός als Hausherrn in V. 27 zu schlagen. Basis ist die hebräische Interpretation des Namens Beelzebul (bā'al zəbūl = Herr der Wohnung / des Hauses). In Mt 10,25 begegnet Beelzebul tatsächlich als οἰκοδεσπότης. In Mk 3,27 wird allerdings der ἰσχυρός weder explizit als Beelzebul identifiziert — unmittelbar zuvor ist zudem vom Satan die Rede (V. 26) — noch greift der Vorwurf Βεελζεβοὺλ ἔχει die in V. 27 geschilderten Vorgänge auf, vgl. dazu EBNER, *Jesus*, 353: "Nach dem Vorwurf geht es um die Hilfe des Beelzebul bei der Austreibung, in Mk 3,27 wird der 'Hausherr' selbst niedergedrungen".

²¹ Vgl. F. BLASS – A. DEBRUNNER – F. REHKOPF, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch* (Göttingen ¹⁷1990) § 448,6.

weder auf den Vorwurf des Satansbündnisses noch auf den der Besessenheit, geschweige denn auf das Von-Sinnen-Sein Jesu. Damit stellt sich noch dringlicher die Frage nach der Funktion des Verses im Kontext markinischer Darstellung. Hierzu bedarf es einer näheren Betrachtung dieses Wortes.

II. Kurzanalyse von Mk 3,27

1. *Gattung*

Bei Mk 3,27 handelt es sich um ein weisheitliches Logion (gilt auch für Mk 3,24-26), in dem Bewährtes aus der alltäglichen Lebenserfahrung als Anknüpfungspunkt theologischen Argumentierens verwendet wird²². Konkret handelt es sich um eine Klugheitsregel, die in ihrer Quintessenz vertraut ist: Der zweite Schritt soll nicht vor dem ersten getan werden. Die Anwendung ist freilich ungewöhnlich, weil die Frage verhandelt wird: Wie habe ich als Räuber oder Einbrecher Erfolg? Die Antwort lautet: Niemand kann ein Haus erfolgreich ausrauben, bevor nicht der (als im Haus anwesend gedachte) Hausherr vorab ausgeschaltet wird. Pragmatisches Ziel ist die Hervorhebung des ersten Schrittes, weil dieser erst den erfolgreichen Vollzug des zweiten ermöglicht. Gezeigt werden soll: Ohne Fesselung des Hausherrn gelingt kein Raub des Inventars²³.

2. *Jes 49,24f als traditionsgeschichtlicher Hintergrund für Mk 3,27?*

In vielen Kommentierungen wird Mk 3,27 mit einer Spruchfolge aus Jes 49,24f LXX in Verbindung gebracht, in der Gott dem im Exil befindlichen Volk Israel die Wiederherstellung des Zion ankündigt²⁴.

²² Zum weisheitlichen Hintergrund von Mk 3,24-27 vgl. bes. EBNER, *Jesus*, 356-363,365.

²³ Dazu dient auch die sprachliche Gestalt von V. 27 als Konditionalgefüge. Dieses wird mit der Apodosis eröffnet, die als irreal ausgewiesen wird (οὐ δύναται οὐδεὶς), falls nicht die in der darauf folgenden Protasis genannte Bedingung vorab erfüllt wird (ἐὰν μὴ πρῶτον). Erst deren Erfüllung ermöglicht den zuerst genannten Schritt, was in kopulativer Erweiterung des Satzgefüges nochmals hervorgehoben wird (καὶ τότε).

²⁴ Vgl. u. a. MYERS, *Binding*, 167.

Jes 49,24 LXX lautet:

μὴ λήμψεταιί τις παρὰ γίγαντος σκῦλα;
*Wird jemand etwa Beutestücke nehmen
 von einem Giganten [= Starken]?*

In PsSal 5,3 findet sich eine beinahe gleichlautende Variante:

οὐ γὰρ λήμψεταιί τις σκῦλα παρὰ ἀνδρὸς δυνατοῦ.
Denn keiner nimmt Beute von einem mächtigen Mann.

Gigant und mächtiger Mann stehen hier für die Fremdvölker, die Israel ins Exil gebracht haben. Dabei ist es der Gigant selbst, der verbrecherisch handelt; er ist nicht Opfer, sondern Täter. Dessen Opfer ist natürlich daran interessiert, sein Eigentum, die Beute (σκῦλα), zurückzuerlangen. Jedoch lassen ihn die Kräfteverhältnisse davon Abstand nehmen. Weil diese Tat nicht einfach hingegenommen werden soll, tritt mit Jes 49,25 LXX Gott selbst als Handelnder auf den Plan:

οὕτως λέγει κύριος
 ἐάν τις αἰχμαλωτεύσῃ γίγαντα λήμψεται σκῦλα
 λαμβάνων δὲ παρὰ ἰσχύοντος σωθήσεται
 ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν κρίσιν σου κρινῶ καὶ ἐγὼ τοὺς υἱοὺς σου ῥύσομαι
*So spricht der Herr:
 Wenn einer einen Giganten gefangen nimmt, wird er Beute erhalten;
 erhält er sie (= die Beute) aber von einem Starken, wird er gerettet werden.
 Ich aber werde deinem Recht Recht verschaffen
 und ich werde deine Söhne retten* ²⁵.

Vorausgesetzt ist somit ein erfolgreicher Beutezug des Starken, dessen Erfolg zunichtegemacht werden soll, indem ihm die Beute wieder abgenommen wird. Durch den Rekurs auf das Gotteshandeln in Jes 49,25b wird deutlich, dass Gott selbst gegen den Giganten einschreiten und dessen Unrechtstat vergelten wird. Davon ist in Mk 3,27 aber nicht die Rede. Vielmehr wird hervorgehoben, dass der

²⁵ Der masoretische Text von Jes 49,25 lautet in der Übersetzung: "Auch einem Starken entreißt man den Gefangenen, und einem Mächtigen entkommt seine Beute. Ich selbst will mit deinem Gegner streiten, ich selbst will deine Söhne befreien".

Einbruch oder Beutezug nicht eines Starken, sondern gegen einen Starken Erfolg hat. Zudem wird dieser Erfolg weder infrage gestellt noch bestraft. Jes 49,24-25 LXX fokussiert sich dagegen darauf, die negativen Folgen eines Überfalls, ausgeführt von einem Giganten oder Mächtigen (vgl. PsSal 5,3), durch einen noch Mächtigeren zu kompensieren. Die Beute soll nicht in der Hand des Übeltäters bleiben. Darauf legt Mk 3,27 keinen Wert. Vielmehr soll die Plünderung des Hausrates eines Starken gelingen und, nochmals, gerade nicht revidiert werden. Der Starke ist in Mk 3,27 Opfer des Überfalls, nicht Übeltäter. Dennoch wird ihm keinerlei Recht verschafft; der Raub bleibt ungestraft. Damit ist die Wertung der Tat als kriminelle Handlung infrage gestellt. Darüber hinaus fokussiert sich das Wort im Markusevangelium klar auf die Welt eines Hauses mitsamt seinem Hausrat (σκεύη). Von Beute (σκῦλα) wird in Mk 3,27 nicht gesprochen. In Jes 49,24-25 LXX repräsentieren offensichtlich Gefangene diese Beute. Wo diese "erbeutet" wurden, wird nicht weiter konkretisiert. Die Bildwelt von Jes 49,24-25 (vgl. PsSal 5,3) zeigt im Vergleich mit Mk 3,27 durchaus Gemeinsamkeiten: In beiden Fällen hat der Starke (Gigant) das Nachsehen. Jedoch ist die inhaltliche Perspektive deutlich verschoben. Es geht nicht um die Salvierung von Unrecht (= Konfiskation der Beute), begangen durch einen Starken, sondern um die Legitimierung einer (scheinbaren) Unrechttat gegen den Starken und seinen Besitz (= Erbeutung des Hausrats)²⁶. Mk 3,27 ist sicherlich von der Bildwelt aus Jes 49,24-25 LXX inspiriert, stellt jedoch eine eigenständige Adaption dar²⁷.

²⁶ Vgl. auch EBNER, *Jesus*, 367.

²⁷ Eine Parallele zu Jes 53,12 ergibt sich dagegen nicht; gegen R. PESCH, *Das Markusevangelium* (HThK.NT 2,1; Freiburg – Basel – Wien⁵1989) 215-216. Im Zentrum steht dort der Gottesknecht, der die Beute teilt: Entweder teilt er sie mit Starken bzw. Zahlreichen (masoret. Text: rabbîm) oder er verteilt die Beute von Starken bzw. erhält Anteil an ihr (LXX: τῶν ἰσχυρῶν μεριεῖ σκῦλα). In beiden Fällen geht es um den Lohn dafür, dass der Gottesknecht die Schuld Israels stellvertretend übernommen hat. Die Beute ist folglich positiv besetzt. Ein Abnehmen der Beute wie in Jes 49,24f steht nicht im Fokus. Auf den Vorgang des Erbeutens (wie in Mk 3,27) wird nicht eingegangen. Thematisiert wird das (Ver)teilen der Beute. Dabei sind die rabbîm im masoret. Text als Bild für ein (jetzt vom Schuldgeschick befreites) Israel zu nehmen. Dagegen bleibt beim LXX-Text eher unklar, wer die Starken sind. Deutlich ist zumindest die Konzentration auf die positive Gewichtung des Gottesknechtslohnes als Beute von Starken (vgl. EBNER, *Jesus*, 367 mit Anm. 95; FRANCE, *Mark*, 173, Anm. 46).

3. Das Bild vom Überfall oder Einbruch

Wird das Bild vom Überfall oder Einbruch näher betrachtet, so ist zunächst festzuhalten, dass die Perspektive des Jesuswortes nicht beim Opfer, sondern beim Kriminellen liegt. Er überfällt den Starken in seinem Haus (εἰσελθεῖν) und fesselt ihn (δεῖν). Damit kann dieser nicht mehr verhindern, dass er seines Eigentums (τὰ σκεύη) beraubt wird. Das für den Raub verwendete Verb διαρπάζειν steht für ein Handeln, das eigentlich von Kollektiven ausgeführt wird (Plünderung durch Räuberbanden oder Soldaten)²⁸. Allerdings tritt dem Starken in Mk 3,27 keine Gruppe, sondern eine Einzelperson gegenüber, wie die Formulierungen im Singular verdeutlichen (εἰσελθών, δῆσῃ, διαρπάσει). Insofern ist die Rede von einem Einbrecher durchaus nicht abwegig, auch wenn seine Handlungen weder als κλέπτειν (= stehlen; vgl. u. a. Gen 44,8; Ex 22,7-8; Obd 1,5 LXX) noch als διορύττειν (= die Hauswand durchbrechen; vgl. Ijob 24,16; Ez 12,5.7.12 LXX) beschrieben werden.

Dass das Opfer, mithin der Unterlegene, als ἰσχυρός, als Starker oder Mächtiger bezeichnet wird, ist auffällig. Eigentlich handelt es sich nämlich um ein biblisch bekanntes Gottesattribut, wie es u. a. in Dtn 10,17 (ὁ θεὸς ὁ μέγας καὶ ἰσχυρὸς καὶ ὁ φοβερός) oder Dan 9,4 (σὺ εἶ ὁ θεὸς ὁ μέγας καὶ ὁ ἰσχυρὸς καὶ ὁ φοβερός) anklingt²⁹. Da Gott jedoch kaum die Rolle des Gefesselten und Wehrlosen einnehmen soll, kann der ἰσχυρός in Mk 3,27 nicht mit Gott identifiziert werden. Vielmehr wird durch die Titulatur ὁ ἰσχυρός die (vermeintlich) starke Stellung dieser Person als Hausherr eingeholt. Er hat in diesem Haus die Entscheidungsbefugnis und jegliches Besitzrecht³⁰. Dass er Haus und Eigentum gegen Diebstahl und

²⁸ Zum Verständnis von διαρπάζειν vgl. u. a. Herodot, I 88:3; Thukydides, VIII 36:1; Demosthenes, *Or* 18:213; Flavius Josephus *Bell.* 2:265.270.305; *Vita* 77. In Verbindung mit σκεύη und οἰκία (vgl. Lk 17,31: τὰ σκεύη αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ = Hab und Gut) vermittelt das Verb die Vorstellung, dass im Zuge einer Plünderung der gesamte Hausrat ausgeräumt wird (vgl. Flavius Josephus, *Bell.* 4:404: οἴκους ἐξεσκευάζοντο).

²⁹ Vgl. auch 2 Esr 19,32; Jer 39,18 LXX; zum Gottesattribut ἰσχυρός vgl. weiter Jos 4,24; 2 Sam 22,31-33.48; 23,5; Neh 1,5; 2 Makk 1,24; Ps 7,12; Ijob 22,13; 33,29; 36,22.26; 37,5.10; Sir 15,18; Jer 27,34; 39,18 LXX; Hag 2,22 LXX^A; PsSal 17,40; TestHiob 4,11; LibAnt 11,8; Offb 18,8; Philo v. Alexandrien, *SpecLeg* 1:307; *LegAll* 3:207.

³⁰ Zu Stellung und Aufgabe des Hausherrn in der Antike vgl. u. a. Aristoteles, *Pol.* 1:1253.1254b.1255b; Philo von Alexandrien, *Post* 181 (ἐπιτροπή οἰκίας).

Überfälle verteidigen will, ist selbstverständlich (vgl. Lk 11,21: ὅταν ὁ ἰσχυρὸς καθωπλισμένος φυλάσῃ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ αὐλήν, ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἐστὶν τὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτοῦ)³¹. Diebstahl und Raub waren in der Antike sowohl innerhalb als auch außerhalb des Frühjudentums geächtet. In den Bestimmungen des jüdischen Bundesbuches heißt es in Ex 22,1: “Wird ein Dieb beim Einbruch ertappt und so geschlagen, dass er stirbt, so entsteht dadurch keine Blutschuld”. Die LXX variiert: οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτῷ φόνος (so ist an ihm [= dem Dieb] kein Mord geschehen). Bestimmungen paganen Rechtsdenkens verlaufen hierzu analog. Zunächst sei auf Ausführungen zur Tötung in Notwehr oder im Rahmen der Selbstverteidigung in Platons *Nomoi* (vor 347 v. Chr.) verwiesen. In *Leg* 9:869c-d wird dazu ausgeführt: “Wer sich gegen jemanden zu Wehr setzt und diesen dabei tötet, weil er von diesem zuerst angegriffen wurde, soll rein von Schuld sein, als hätte er einen Feind getötet” (καθάπερ πολέμιον ἀποκτείνας ἔστω κάθαρος). Auf den Fall eines auf frischer Tat ertappten und dabei getöteten Diebes geht das römische Zwölftafelgesetz (um 450 v. Chr.) ein, welches während der gesamten Zeit des Römischen Reiches in Geltung stand. Bei Nacht ist die Tötung des Diebes als Notwehrhandlung straffrei (*LegXII* 1:17: *si nox furtum factum sit, si im occisit, iure caesus esto*), bei Tag nur, wenn der Dieb sich mit einer Waffe verteidigt, was durch lautes Um-Hilfe-Rufen (*endplorare*) angezeigt werden muss (*LegXII* 1:18: *<si> luci, si se telo defendit, endoque plorato*)³².

Folglich ist ein Hausherr gerade auch dadurch der Starke, dass er im Zuge der Verteidigung seines Besitzes rechtmäßig zur äußersten Maßnahme greifen darf, der Tötung des Einbrechers. Auf seiner

³¹ Anders als in Mk 3,27 (und Mt 12,29) wird im Lukasevangelium nicht die Situation eines einfachen Hausherrn, sondern eines militärisch gerüsteten (καθωπλισμένος) Machthabers beschrieben, der in einem Palast (αὐλή) residiert. Dieser erleidet gegen einen Stärkeren (ἰσχυρότερος) eine endgültige Niederlage, die ihn wehr- und besitzlos zurücklässt (vgl. Lk 11,22). Lk fokussiert sich somit auf eine machtpolitische Auseinandersetzung mit kriegesischen Mitteln. Das Grundprinzip bleibt jedoch gleich: Der eigene Besitz soll verteidigt werden; zu Lk 11,21f vgl. bes. M. WOLTER, *Das Lukasevangelium* (HNT 5; Tübingen 2008) 419-420.

³² *LegXII* wird zitiert nach *Das Zwölftafelgesetz* (ed. D. FLACH) (TzF 83; Darmstadt 2004); zum Deliktrecht des Zwölftafelgesetzes vgl. u. a. J. EBEL – G. THIELMANN, *Rechtsgeschichte. Von der Römischen Antike bis zur Neuzeit* (Jurathek Studium; Heidelberg 2003) 26-30.

Seite stehen Recht und Gesetz³³, die Diebstähle oder Raubüberfälle im eigenen Haus ächten. Falls sie dennoch geschehen, so soll zumindest deren rechtliche Verfolgung und Verurteilung gesichert sein, mit entsprechenden Straffolgen für den Übeltäter. Allerdings macht die Schilderung in Mk 3,27 deutlich, dass juristische Maßstäbe hier überhaupt nicht relevant sind. Eine rechtlich legitimierte Stärke mündet nicht in faktische Stärke. Von einer durch gültige, gesellschaftlich anerkannte Rechtsordnungen legitimierten Gegenwehr wird nicht gesprochen. Vielmehr wird einzig die Ausschaltung des ἰσχυρός durch Fesselung (δένειν) in den Fokus gerückt. Diese Handlung kann ungestört vonstattengehen, weil jenseits von Recht und Gesetz allein das Gesetz des physisch Stärkeren zum Zuge kommt, und zwar erfolgreich. Die rechtlich garantierte Machtstellung des Hausherrn als Herr über sein Eigentum erweist sich somit als nicht existent, weil sie durch seine Fesselung nicht zur Auswirkung kommen kann. Insofern ist dies nicht nur Bild seiner Entmächtigung, sondern auch Ausdruck einer inhärenten Machtlosigkeit gegen den äußeren Anschein. Recht und Gesetz verleihen keinerlei Schutz; sie garantieren keinerlei Macht. Um diesen Aspekt zu verstärken, wird darüber hinaus der Gedanke einer Verfolgung der kriminellen Handlung nach gültigen Rechtsmaßstäben völlig ausgeblendet (anders in Jes 49,24f LXX, s. o.). Wenn dieser Rechtsbruch jedoch unkommentiert bleibt, so steht seine Wertung als kriminelle Handlung grundsätzlich zur Disposition. Das Recht, auf das sich der Starke als Opfer berufen kann, erweist sich nämlich als wirkungs- und damit nutzlos. Der Überfall mit anschließendem Raub mag aus der Perspektive des ἰσχυρός ein Verbrechen sein; allerdings soll es gelingen. Es soll somit das Unrecht siegen.

In die Rolle des Stärkeren rückt eindeutig der verbrecherische Eindringling. Allerdings wird er nicht als ἰσχυρότερος bezeichnet (vgl. Mk 1,7). Er verbleibt vielmehr in völliger Anonymität. Sein Profil ergibt sich allein durch seine Handlungen, die Ausdruck seiner δύναμις sind (οὐ δύναται οὐδεὶς). Dabei ist zu beachten, dass zwei Handlungen von ein und derselben Person ausgesagt werden: 1. die Fesselung des Starken; 2. der Raub des Hausrats. Der für die Argumentation entscheidende Akt stellt das Fesseln oder Binden

³³ Zu den Entwicklungen im römischen Recht der Kaiserzeit vgl. u. a. J. BLEICKEN, *Verfassungs- und Sozialgeschichte des Römischen Kaiserreiches* (UTB 838; Paderborn²1981) I, 262-276.

dar (δεῖν). Dieses dient dem Ziel, jeglichen Widerstand gegen den Raub der σκεύη zu verhindern ³⁴. Es ist freilich nur eine von vielen Möglichkeiten, eventuelle Gegenwehr auszuschalten ³⁵. Insofern bedarf die Rede vom δεῖν des Starken der Erläuterung. In diesem Zusammenhang ist auf die unmittelbar vorausgehende Exorzismusdebatte zu verweisen (vgl. Mk 3,22-26). Im Zuge der Aufrichtung der βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ belegen die Exorzismen Jesu die sukzessive Entmächtigung des Satans und seiner Helfershelfer auf Erden; ihr Schadenswirken auf die Menschen wird peu à peu zurückgedrängt, wobei sie ihre Macht über diese endgültig verlieren. Dieses satanisch-dämonische Schadenswirken wird im frühjüdischen Schrifttum teilweise selbst als Bindung beschrieben, die durch göttliches Einwirken beseitigt und damit gelöst wird. Ein Beleg findet sich u. a. im Buch Tobit. Dort wird der Engel Raffael gesandt, um den bösen Dämon Aschmodai zu fesseln (vgl. Tob 3,17: δῆσαι Ασμοδαυν τὸ πονηρὸν δαιμόνιον). Dieser Dämon tötet die frischgebackenen Ehemänner Saras, der Tochter Raguëls, jeweils in der Hochzeitsnacht (vgl. Tob 3,7-8). Ziel des Himmelsboten ist es, eine ungefährdete Eheschließung zwischen Sara und Tobits Sohn Tobias zu ermöglichen. Der Dämon wird unschädlich gemacht, indem er von Raffael endgültig gefesselt wird (vgl. Tob 8,3: ἔδησεν αὐτὸ ὁ ἄγγελος) ³⁶.

Ist die atl.-frühjüdische Rede von der Bindung *einzelner* Dämonen oder Schadensgeister eher selten, so gehört die Bindung widergöttlicher Mächte einschließlich des Satans durch Gott oder seine himm-

³⁴ Das Verb δεῖν findet sich daher in LXX und NT häufig, wenn die Fesselung von Menschen, bspw. im Zuge einer Verhaftung, angesprochen wird; vgl. u. a. Ri 15,10.1213; 2 Sam 3,34; 2 Kön 17,4; 2 Chron 33,11; 1 Esr 1,36.38; Jdt 6,13; 3 Makk 6,19; 4 Makk 11,9-10; Jes 52,11; Ez 3,25; Dan 4,17.32; Mt 14,3; 22,13; 27,2; Mk 5,3-4; 6,17; 15,1.7; Joh 18,12.24; Apg 9,2.14.21; 12,6; 21,11.13.33; 22,5.29; 24,27.

³⁵ Denkbar wäre auch eine Flucht des Hausherrn oder dessen Misshandlung bzw. Tötung (vgl. dazu Flavius Josephus, *Ant.* 10:112; 14:410; 20:187; *Bell.* 1:302; 2:265.270.305.440.494.504.508-509; 4:314.430.642; 6:358; *Vita* 127.376).

³⁶ Vgl. auch Jub 48,15, wo von einer Fesselung des Dämons Mastema die Rede ist, um dessen Intervention zuungunsten Israels im Rahmen der Exodusereignisse zu verhindern. Er wird vorübergehend freigelassen, um den Ägyptern zu schaden, danach aber wieder gebunden (vgl. Jub 48,18). Das Szenario trägt keine eschatologische Kontur, kann aber entsprechend ausgestaltet werden; vgl. u. a. Offb 9,14; 20,2-3.

lischen Exekutivorgane zu den Grundannahmen frühjüdischer Heilserwartung. Vorausgesetzt ist jeweils ein eschatologischer Kontext ³⁷, innerhalb dessen diese Bindung häufig als Vorstufe zur endgültigen Vernichtung am Ende der Zeiten beschrieben ist ³⁸. In Mk 3,27 wird dieses Vorstufen-Motiv freilich nicht aktiviert. Zugleich ist die Vorstellung einer (eschatologischen) Bindung Satans oder seiner Entourage im Allgemeinen allenfalls zurückhaltend angedeutet, weil “nur” ausgesagt wird, dass ein Starker in seinem Haus erfolgreich überfallen wird. Erst die Einbeziehung der Exorzismusdebatte in Mk 3,23-26 erlaubt die Bezugsetzung, dass hinter dieser Schilderung eines erfolgreichen Überfalls eine Auseinandersetzung steht, welche die übermenschliche Ebene einschließt. Die Fesselung des Starken ist dann auf den Satan (vgl. Mk 3,23.26) und seine Entmächtigung zu beziehen; er ist der Hausherr, der überfallen und gefesselt wird ³⁹. Ihm wird als zweitem Schritt sein Eigentum, hier versinnbildlicht durch seinen Hausrat (τὰ σκεύη αὐτοῦ) ⁴⁰, geraubt. Möglich ist, dass die Dämonen den “Hausrat” Satans bilden, sodass sie damit seinem Machtbereich entzogen und unschädlich gemacht werden ⁴¹. Andererseits ist denkbar, die σκεύη als diejenigen Menschen zu identifizieren, die im Zuge der Exorzismen Jesu aus dem Machtbereich des Satans und seiner dämonischen Helfershelfer befreit

³⁷ Vgl. u. a. äthHen 18,14-16; 56,1; TestLevi 18,12; ähnlich auch 11Q13 11-13.24f; TestSeb 9,8; TestDan 5,11.

³⁸ Vgl. bes. Jes 24,21f; äthHen 10,4-6.11-13; 21,1-10; Jub 10,5-9.11; Test-Sim 6,6; Offb 20,2.10.

³⁹ Vgl. u. a. DONAHUE – HARRINGTON, *Mark*, 129; FRANCE, *Mark*, 172f; GUELICH, *Mark 1:1 – 8:26*, 176.

⁴⁰ Zu σκεῦος vgl. E. PLÜMACHER, “Art. σκεῦος”, EWNT (32011) III, 597-599. Es bezeichnet unspezifisch “Gerätschaften aller Art” (ebd., 597). Die pluralische Wendung τὰ σκεύη steht wiederum allgemein für Habe oder Besitz, was in Mk 3,27 i.S. von Hausrat aufgefasst werden kann (vgl. ebd., 598). Von Beute (σκόλα; vgl. Jes 49,24f LXX) spricht Mk 3,27 jedoch nicht, was für die Textinterpretation stärker berücksichtigt werden sollte; anders J. GNILKA, *Das Evangelium nach Markus I* (EKK 2,1; Zürich – Neukirchen-Vluyn 51998) 150; L. SCHENKE, *Das Markusevangelium. Literarische Eigenart – Text und Kommentierung* (Stuttgart 2005) 121.

⁴¹ Vgl. M. EBNER, *Das Markusevangelium*. Neu übersetzt und kommentiert (Stuttgart 2008) 45; B. HEININGER, “Das Reich Gottes. Neues Testament”, *Das Reich Gottes* (eds. G. VANONI – B. HEININGER) (NEB.Themen 4; Würzburg 2002) 61-117, hier 77.

werden⁴². Jenseits dieser Akzentuierungsmöglichkeiten ist freilich zu betonen: Der Raub des Hausrats dient vorrangig der Illustrierung der Wehrlosigkeit des vermeintlich starken Satans⁴³. Der "Böse" wird Opfer einer "bösen" Handlung. Diese wird als anti-satanischer Akt in ihrer "Bosheit" natürlich *ad absurdum* geführt. Damit deutet sich ein Rollentausch in Sachen Gut und Böse an.

Der auf die Exorzismen Jesu bezogene Kontext in Mk 3,23-26 intensiviert diese Perspektive. Trotz schon angebrochener βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ auf Erden belegen die eher sporadisch vollzogenen Dämonenbannungen Jesu auch, dass der Satan auf Erden nachwievor ein real existierender Machtfaktor ist. Er erscheint als starker Hausherr, sodass sein Haus als widergöttlicher irdischer Herrschaftsraum anzusehen ist, dem die Menschen scheinbar hilflos ausgeliefert sind. Dieser satanische "Lebensraum" trägt mit Mk 3,27 sogar das Signum von Stabilität und anerkannter Rechtmäßigkeit. Soll dieser Raum als gottfeindlich desavouiert und jeglicher Macht und Legitimität beraubt werden, so kann dies nur durch jemanden geschehen, der gerade jenseits von Recht und Gesetz im "satanischen" Sinne steht. Insofern ist es nur konsequent, dass der Angriff auf die irdische Macht des Satans als Handlung eines Kriminellen geschildert wird. Legitimität und gesellschaftliche Anerkennung sind dabei weder zu erwarten noch im Eigentlichen von Belang. Einzig entscheidend ist die reale Macht.

4. Wer ist der Kriminelle?

Dies führt unmittelbar zur Frage, wer sich hinter dem namenlosen Angreifer des Starken verbirgt. Würde es sich exklusiv um eine Auseinandersetzung mit Satan handeln, so wäre es nur konsequent, dass als dessen natürlicher Gegner Gott selbst auftreten würde⁴⁴. Immerhin ist für ihn das Epitheton ὁ ἰσχυρός reserviert (vgl. Dtn

⁴² Vgl. u. a. DSCHULNIGG, *Markusevangelium*, 125; GNILKA, *Markus I*, 150; PESCH, *Markusevangelium I*, 216; SCHENKE, *Markusevangelium*, 121; für das Motiv, dass Menschen "Gefäße" Satans sein können vgl. TestNaph 8,6; ähnlich auch 4Q175 24-25; ApkMos 26,1.

⁴³ Insofern ist die Bindung des Starken als entscheidender Schritt anzusehen (mit EBNER, *Jesus*, 370-371).

⁴⁴ Diese Lösung wird meist bevorzugt, wenn Mk 3,27 als authentisches Jesuswort diskutiert wird; vgl. bes. EBNER, *Jesus*, 371; HEININGER, *Reich Gottes*, 76-77.

10,17; Dan 9,4; s. o.). Insofern wäre der Konflikt Gott vs. Satan ein Konflikt des wahrhaft Starken gegen den vermeintlich Starken. Allerdings bleibt der Evangelientext hier sehr unpräzise. Eine konkrete Identifizierung des kriminell Handelnden wird nicht vorgenommen. Die eigentliche *crux interpretum* besteht darin, dass die Bindung des Starken und der Raub des Hausrates von ein und derselben Person durchgeführt werden (οὐ δύναται οὐδεὶς εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ ἰσχυροῦ εἰσελθὼν τὰ σκεύη αὐτοῦ διαρπάσαι). Eine Aufteilung auf verschiedene Handlungssubjekte, Gott und Jesus, wird durch die Textgestalt von Mk 3,27 verunmöglicht ⁴⁵. Wer die σκεύη rauben will, muss zuvor den ἰσχυρός gebunden haben. Zugleich wird meist ein Kontext vorausgesetzt, der die Exorzismen Jesu als Beleg der schon vollzogenen eschatologischen Entmächtigung des Satans durch Gott selbst ansieht ⁴⁶. Eine Bindung widergöttlicher Mächte lässt sich so natürlich leichter mit dem eschatologischen Handeln Gottes verbinden (vgl. u. a. Jes 24,21-22; äthHen 10,4-6.11-13; 18,14-16; 21,1-10; 56,1; 69,28; Jub 10,5-9.11; TestLevi 18,12; TestSim 6,6).

Jedoch bleibt als Frage, welches Gotteshandeln im Raub der σκεύη vermittelt sein soll. Nun ist es möglich, die dämonische Entourage Satans mit den σκεύη zu identifizieren. Ihr Raub wäre somit Zeichen des fortschreitenden Zusammenbruchs ihres Machtbereichs auf Erden. Die Entmächtigung Satans durch Gott würde folglich zugleich die Entmächtigung seiner Helfershelfer implizieren, was durch die gelungenen Exorzismen Jesu sichtbar werde. Das Gotteshandeln wäre somit als umfassendes Einschreiten gegen alle Ausprägungen des Widergöttlichen wahrzunehmen ⁴⁷. Im vorausgehenden Kontext Mk 3,22-26 wird jedoch nicht nur das Phänomen göttlicher Entmächtigung der Dämonen debattiert. Vielmehr wird

⁴⁵ Die problematische Sprachgestalt wird zwar erkannt, häufig aber mithilfe einer interpretationserleichternden Unschärfe bagatellisiert; vgl. u. a. PESCH, *Markusevangelium* I, 215, der Gott und Jesus faktisch zusammendenkt ("Gott in Jesus"), oder GUELICH, *Mark 1:1 – 8:26*, 177, der sich gegen eine allegorisierende Aufteilung in die Einzelakte Bindung und Raub ausspricht.

⁴⁶ Vgl. u. a. DONAHUE – HARRINGTON, *Mark*, 134; GUELICH, *Mark 1:1 – 8:26*, 177; SCHENKE, *Markusevangelium*, 120-121.

⁴⁷ Entsprechendes wird vor allem für die Verständnisebene des historischen Jesus vorausgesetzt; vgl. EBNER, *Jesus*, 372: "Nach Mk 3,27 plündert Gott selbst ...".

die Legitimität der erfolgreich durchgeführten Exorzismen Jesu diskutiert (vgl. Mk 1,21-28.32.39; 3,11-12). Dabei findet die Befreiung besessener Menschen von ihren dämonischen Besitzern gerade im Bild vom gelungenen Raub der σκεύη ihr klares Pendant. Ziel ist die Befreiung aus dem Eigentums- und damit Herrschaftsbereich des Widergöttlichen. Da τὰ σκεύη das Bild von unbeweglichem Mobiliar oder Inventar aktiviert, ist eine Übertragung auf diejenigen Menschen, die sich aufgrund ihrer Besessenheit nicht von selbst aus dem Haus des Starken entfernen, d. h. befreien können, plausibel. Sie sind immobiles Besitztum des Satans. Nur durch einen massiven Eingriff von außen kann ihre Situation verändert werden. Insofern lässt sich gerade der zweite Akt des kriminell Handelnden mit der heilvollen Exorzismustätigkeit Jesu verbinden: "Jesus has plundered the house of Satan"⁴⁸. Jeder Exorzismus Jesu stellt einen Raub am Satan in seinem Haus dar, weil ihm damit ein Mensch, den er beherrschen kann und so zu seinem "Mobiliar" macht, für immer verloren geht. Vorbedingung ist freilich seine Bindung i.S. der Entmächtigung, um zu verhindern, dass er seinen dämonischen Dienern zur Hilfe eilt. Ist Jesus damit als Räuber der σκεύη des Starken ausgewiesen, muss ihm auch dessen vorausgehende Bindung zugeschrieben werden⁴⁹.

Diese auf die Person Jesu bezogene Interpretation ist zwar umstritten, muss aber m. E. für die Ebene des Evangelisten bevorzugt werden⁵⁰. Immerhin versucht der gesamte Abschnitt Mk 3,20-35, Wertungen zum Verkündigungshandeln Jesu, seiner tatkräftigen und wirkmächtigen διδασχὴ καὶ κατ' ἐξουσίαν (vgl. Mk 1,27) abzugeben. Er ist nicht von Sinnen, von Beelzebul besessen oder mit Satan im Bunde, sondern der mit dem Gottesgeist Begabte (vgl. Mk 1,10) und dadurch der in göttlicher Vollmacht Handelnde. Wer sich gegen Jesus und seine Botschaft entscheidet, begeht die Sünde wider den Heiligen Geist (vgl. Mk 3,29)⁵¹. Bei der Versuchung Jesu ist der Satan an Jesus gescheitert (vgl. Mk 1,12-13)⁵². Jesus

⁴⁸ DONAHUE – HARRINGTON, *Mark*, 134; stellvertretend für viele.

⁴⁹ Mit DSCHULNIGG, *Mark*, 125; FRITZEN, *Von Gott verlassen?*, 217; MYERS, *Binding*, 167; SCHENKE, *Markusevangelium*, 121.

⁵⁰ Zur anders perspektivierten Ebene des historischen Jesus vgl. bes. EBNER, *Jesus*, 372.

⁵¹ Mit SCHENKE, *Markusevangelium*, 121.

⁵² Zur Relation von Mk 3,27 und Mk 1,12-13 vgl. u. a. FRANCE, *Mark*, 174. Skeptisch bleibt GUELICH, *Mark 1:1 – 8:26*, 176-177.

beseitigt dessen dämonische Gefolgschaft. Insofern steht dem äußerlich Starken ein wahrhaft Starker gegenüber. Dies dient jedoch nicht einer Demonstration des Sendungsbewusstseins Jesu ⁵³, sondern der Anzeige eines Herrschaftswechsels auf Erden. Vor dem mit dem Gottesgeist Begabten zerbricht jede (irdische) Macht des Satans. Wo Jesus auftritt, werden dem Satan im wahrsten Sinn des Wortes die Hände gebunden ⁵⁴. Die Herrschaftsordnung des Satans mag scheinbar stabil und legitimiert erscheinen wie die Besitzordnung eines Hauses; dennoch ist sie dem "kriminellen" Eindringling Jesus völlig ausgeliefert und bricht daher sukzessive zusammen.

III. Die Strategie einer Umwertung der Werte in Mk 3,27

Mk 3,27 lassen sich im Rahmen des zweiten Evangeliums mehrere Funktionen zuweisen:

1. Im Blick auf den unmittelbaren Kontext (vgl. Mk 3,20-30) wird mithilfe eines zusätzlichen Argumentes widerlegt, dass Jesus bei seinen Exorzismen mit Satan im Bunde sein könnte. Satan ist nach Mk 3,27 kein Verbündeter, sondern ein von Jesus Gebundener und damit Machtloser. Damit wird die Absurdität eines möglichen Bündnisses Jesu mit Satan klar herausgestellt. Aus welchem Grund sollte sich Jesus mit einer Person verbünden, die er durch seine Exorzismen als Ohnmächtigen entlarvt?

2. Darüber hinaus zeigt der Evangelist Markus, dass Jesus als Gegner allgemein akzeptierter Lebens- und Glaubensordnungen wahrgenommen wird, wie es die Äußerungen der Schriftgelehrten und Familie Jesu in Mk 3,20-35 belegen. Nach ihren Wertvorstellungen und Normen ist Jesus ein außerhalb religiöser und sozialer Ordnungen Stehender. Einerseits verweigert er sich gegenüber seiner gesellschaftlich zugewiesenen Rolle innerhalb seines Familienverbandes (vgl. Mk 3,21.31-35), andererseits unterwirft er sich nicht dem Urteil theologischer Professionalität der Schriftgelehrten

⁵³ Gegen J. KREMER, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (RNT; Regensburg 1981) 120; mit GNILKA, *Markus I*, 150.

⁵⁴ Dabei bleibt völlig unbenommen, dass Jesus, der Geistbegabte, natürlich immer als Werkzeug Gottes agiert. Insofern ist jeder Exorzismus Jesu auch und vor allem gottgewollter Diebstahl am Satan.

(vgl. Mk 3,22). In diesem Sinne ist Jesus jeweils ein *outlaw* oder *misfit*, sodass Jesu Selbststilisierung als Krimineller in Mk 3,27 ironischerweise zutreffend ist. Aus der Sicht Satans, seiner dämonischen bzw. irdischen Helfershelfer und der von ihnen errichteten und bestimmten Lebensordnung ist Jesus ein Verbrecher. Dieser handelt jedoch im göttlichen Auftrag zum Heil der Menschen; insofern ist dieses kriminelle Handeln absolut berechtigt. Die soteriologische Zielrichtung des Handelns Jesu rechtfertigt somit den Einsatz aller Mittel unabhängig von Erwägungen zur Rechtmäßigkeit seines Handelns. Damit fungiert Mk 3,27 zugleich als Problemanzeige hinsichtlich der Maßstäbe und Normen, die zu einer solch negativen Einschätzung Jesu und seines Handelns führen. Ziel ist im Gesamtzusammenhang von Mk 3,20-35, die Fehlerhaftigkeit dieser Wahrnehmung Jesu zu begründen. Als deren Grundlage werden nämlich Maßstäbe angelegt, die insgesamt satanisch und damit widergöttlich sind, sodass ihnen jegliche Legitimität abzusprechen ist. Sie mögen im kollektiven Bewusstsein der zahlreichen Widersacher Jesu als rechtmäßig verankert sein und daraus ihre Stärke und Macht beziehen. Diese existiert freilich gar nicht, weil, wie Mk 3,27 verdeutlicht, der Starke gegenüber dem "Verbrecher" Jesus realiter der Machtlose ist. Insofern belegt diese Verkehrung von Rollenwertungen, dass das eine Evangelium von der Basileia, das Jesus im Markusevangelium propagiert und repräsentiert (vgl. Mk 1,1.14-15), vertraute und gesellschaftlich verankerte Herrschaftsstrukturen und Wertmaßstäbe jenseits der Basileia Gottes infrage stellt. Wertungen von Außenstehenden, wie sie in Mk 3,20-35 formuliert werden (Von-Sinnen-Sein, von Beelzebul oder einem unreinen Geist besessen, mit dem Satan im Bunde) laufen daher allesamt ins Leere und belegen nur die eigene Widergöttlichkeit.

3. Innerhalb des Markusevangelium verstärkt die Aussage von Mk 3,27 die Christologisierungstendenz in der Darstellung des irdischen Wirkens Jesu. Als Sohn Gottes (vgl. Mk 1,1), als der er auch von seinen dämonischen Gegenspielern (an)erkannt wird (vgl. Mk 3,11), ist er der mit dem Gottesgeist Begabte (vgl. Mk 1,10-11), der in eigenständiger Weise den Kampf gegen die noch bestehende irdische Macht des Satans führen kann und darf. Kann ein aktiver Satan Jesu Heilsmission weder einschränken noch gar gefährden (vgl. Mk 1,12f), sondern muss diese in Therapien oder Exorzismen ungestört zulassen (vgl. Mk 1,21-34.40-45; 2,1-12; 3,1-5.11-12), so wird mit Mk 3,27 gezeigt: Wo Jesus auftritt,

zerfällt die scheinbar stabile Macht Satans, erweist sich Jesus als einzig Mächtiger, als wahrhafter ἰσχυρός, der Satans störerischen Einfluss auf Erden tatkräftig zurückdrängt. Satans Rolle ist durch Jesu machtvolles Handeln die eines ohnmächtig Passiven. Augenfällig wird dies durch Jesu Exorzismen, welche die Menschen aus dem Besitztum Satans befreien. Diese können jedoch nur gelingen, wenn Jesus seinen widergöttlichen Gegenspieler realiter entmächtigt hat. Insofern ist jede Infragestellung des heilvollen Handelns Jesu absurd, nicht weil er der faktisch Stärkere als Satan ist, sondern weil diese faktische Stärke zugunsten der real heilsbedürftigen Menschen eingesetzt wird. Die christologische Aufwertung der Rolle Jesu im Kampf gegen das Böse ist somit kein Selbstzweck, sondern bleibt an die soteriologische Grundausrichtung der von Jesus verkündigten und repräsentierten βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ zurückgebunden. Im Dienst des menschlichen Heils ist jedes Handeln gerechtfertigt, selbst ein Verbrechen, allerdings nur, weil es ein Verbrechen am Satan ist.

4. Wird der weitere Erzählverlauf des Evangeliums betrachtet, so muss auffallen, dass die in Mk 3,27 als entmächtigt proklamierten Herrschaftsordnungen und -strukturen scheinbar den Sieg davontragen. Passion und Kreuzestod Jesu belegen ihre vermeintliche Stärke. Die in Mk 3,27 gezeigte Selbststilisierung Jesu als Krimineller entspricht ironischerweise voll und ganz dem Urteil seiner Gegner. Diese lassen ihn wie einen Räuber verhaften (vgl. Mk 14,48: ὥς ἐπὶ ληστήν ἐξήλθατε μετὰ μαχαίρων καὶ ξύλων συλλαβεῖν με;) ⁵⁵. Im Prozess Jesu vor Pilatus wird zudem der gefesselte (!) politische Aufrührer und erwiesene Mörder Barabbas (vgl. Mk 15,7: μετὰ τῶν στασιαστῶν δεδεμένος οἵτινες ἐν τῇ στάσει φόνον πεποιήκεισαν) amnestiert, der in diesem Sinne aber unschuldige Jesus zur Todesstrafe des Kreuzes verurteilt (vgl. Mk 15,15). Zwar gehört diese Amnestie zur Rechtskompetenz des jeweiligen römischen Statthalters. Dieses Recht führt sich jedoch selbst ad absurdum, wenn Kriminelle, denen ihr Verbrechen nachgewiesen wurde, freigelassen werden, während offensichtlich Unschuldige (vgl. Mk 15,10) nicht nur nicht freigesprochen werden,

⁵⁵ Der Begriff ληστής, der bei Flavius Josephus zum Terminus technicus für die zelotischen Widerstandskämpfer gegen die römische Besatzungsmacht wird (vgl. u. a. *Bell.* 2:228, 235, 238 241, 253-254), bezeichnet im zweiten Evangelium allgemein Räuber oder Banditen (vgl. Mk 11,17).

sondern ihnen auch eine mögliche und völlig gerechtfertigte Begnadigung verweigert wird⁵⁶. Schließlich wird Jesus gekreuzigt, jedoch nicht allein, sondern in der "Gesellschaft" von zwei weiteren λησταί (vgl. Mk 15,27). Jesus beendet damit sein Leben genau in der Rolle, die er sich nach Mk 3,27 aneignet, nämlich als Verbrecher, der in der Gesellschaft von Verbrechern sterben muss. Jesu Kriminalität wird auf Basis gesellschaftlich anerkannter Rechtsnormen offiziell bestätigt und entsprechend geahndet. Weil er sich in vielfacher Weise als gesellschaftlicher *misfit* (vgl. Mk 3,20-35) erwiesen hat, ist sein Todesgeschick als verurteilter Verbrecher nur folgerichtig. Dennoch ist es gerade der schwach und ohnmächtig am Kreuz Gestorbene, der sich als wahrhafter ἰσχυρός erweist. Was schon die Dämonen in Mk 3,11 erkannten, wird am Ende des Evangeliums durch einen Vertreter römischer Staatsmacht bestätigt: ἀληθῶς οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος υἱὸς θεοῦ ἦν (Mk 15,39)⁵⁷. Dabei greift dieser zu einer staatsrechtlich vertrauten Titulatur für die oberste herrscherliche Macht im Römischen Reich, den römischen Kaiser: Dieser Verbrecher Jesus war Sohn Gottes, *divi filius* (vgl. Mk 1,1; 3,11)⁵⁸. Der *divi filius* Jesus ist somit der einzig Mächtige, der einzig wahre ἰσχυρός. Irdische Herrschaftsstrukturen mögen noch existieren, wie auch der Satan noch existiert. Deren Macht ist jedoch nur noch eine Macht des äußeren Anscheins. Sie mögen in der Lage sein, Jesus und sein Heilshandeln zu kriminalisieren. Aktiv verhindern können sie es nicht, wie Mk 3,27 angesichts der erfolgreichen exorzistischen Tätigkeit Jesu anzeigt.

⁵⁶ Vgl. dazu M. GIELEN, *Die Passionserzählung in den vier Evangelien. Literarische Gestaltung — theologische Schwerpunkte* (Stuttgart 2008) 151-152.

⁵⁷ Formal schwankt die Aussage des Zenturios zwischen der Akklamation eines Höhergestellten und einem Nachruf; vgl. dazu K. BERGER, *Formen und Gattungen im Neuen Testament* (UTB 2532; Tübingen – Basel 2005) 290-292. Zur sachlichen Einordnung vgl. A. WYPADLO, "‘Wahrhaftig, dieser Mensch war Gottes Sohn’ (Mk 15,39). Überlegungen zur Funktion des Centuriobekenntnisses im christologischen Entwurf des Markusevangeliums", *BZ* 55 (2011) 179-208, hier 183-186, 206-208.

⁵⁸ Zum Titel *divi filius* als kaiserliche Herrschaftslegitimation vgl. B. HEININGER, "‘Politische Theologie’ im Markusevangelium. Der Aufstieg Vespasians zum Kaiser und der Abstieg Jesu ans Kreuz", *Die Inkulturation des Christentums. Aufsätze und Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt* (B. HEININGER) (WUNT 255; Tübingen 2010) 181-204, hier 183-186.

IV. Fazit

Summa summarum lässt sich Mk 3,27 einer übergeordneten Strategie des Markusevangelisten zuordnen, die Jesusgeschichte als Evangelium der Umwertung wie Neubestimmung von Herrschaft, Wertvorstellungen und Normen zu verfassen. Dabei stellt sich die Aussage von Mk 3,27 als “verblüffende”⁵⁹ Travestie dar, bei der bekannte Rollen mit ihren Wertungen in ihr genaues Gegenteil verkehrt werden. Anders als im Shakespeare-Drama *Macbeth* dient diese Travestie jedoch nicht als Hinweis auf eine göttliche Natur- und Moralordnung, die gestört ist, sondern soll die Jesus anfeindende und verurteilende Lebens- und Gesellschaftsordnung mitsamt ihren Repräsentanten in sich als widergöttlich entlarven. Ihr Versagen besteht darin, das göttliche Heilshandeln zugunsten der Menschen durch die Diskreditierung seines Agenten und Repräsentanten Jesus nicht wahrnehmen zu wollen. Mk 3,27 betont jedoch eindeutig: Die eigentliche Macht in dieser Welt liegt einzig und allein bei dem mit göttlicher Vollmacht ausgestatteten Verkünder der Gottesherrschaft, Jesus von Nazaret. Jegliche Kritik an ihm belegt nur die Defizienz einer Wahrnehmung, die nur auf “augenscheinliche Geltung”⁶⁰ setzt. Diese ist jedoch längst als ohnmächtig entlarvt, weil ihr oberster Repräsentant, Satan, von Jesus gebunden wurde. Mk 3,27 zeigt sich somit einer Umwertungsintention verpflichtet, die sich im Markusevangelium als entscheidendes Charakteristikum des gesamten Jesuserignisses darstellen wird. Die Heilsmacht Gottes, die in und durch Jesus von Nazaret auf Erden wirkt, ist aktiv wirkende Macht gegen den äußeren Anschein. Daher mag sie sogar in “verbrecherischer” Gestalt auftreten, ohne ihre Heilwirksamkeit infrage zu stellen. Insofern gilt auch für Mk 3,27 im Kontext des Markusevangeliums: *Fair is foul, and foul is fair!*

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⁵⁹ Mit EBNER, *Jesus*, 371.

⁶⁰ FRITZEN, *Von Gott verlassen?*, 308.

SUMMARY

Mk 3,27 offers various functions within the context of the Second Gospel narrative. First, pertaining to the successful exorcisms of Jesus, it refuses allegations of Jesus being an ally of Satan (Mk 3,22). Mk 3,27 depicts Satan as the incapacitated strong man, no one Jesus might be in league with. Second, by assigning the role of the nameless criminal to Jesus the verse ridicules perceptions which portray him as a religious and social misfit (Mk 3,21-22.30). By acting “feloniously” against Satan and later dying as a convicted felon in Jerusalem Jesus solely executes God’s final soteriological will.

When Papyri and Codices Speak: Revisiting John 2,23-25¹

When one reads the Gospel of John, one may easily overlook the author's brief comments, viz., 2,23-25, between Jesus' encounter with the disciples and his act of temple-cleansing in 1,35 – 2,22 and the pericope of Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus in John 3. Scholars have speculated about the origin of these verses. Their role in the context in the final form of the Gospel has also been noted by commentators. In this paper, I will first review a near consensus among modern commentators regarding the role of 2,23-25. Then, I will turn to the earliest manuscripts to see the hints that were left there. In view of this evidence, I will suggest an alternative view as to the role that 2,23-25 played. By highlighting its reasonableness from a narrative perspective, I will show that 2,23-25 should be seen as an "anticlimactic concluding remark" connected to 1,35 – 2,22.

I. Viewpoints of Modern Commentators on John 2,23-25

A cursory examination of commentaries in recent decades reveals that there is a near consensus concerning the role of John 2,23-25 in its literary context. C.H. Dodd in his *Historical Tradition of the Fourth Gospel* writes: "The three verses [2,23-25] are probably the evangelist's introduction to the pericope of Nicodemus rather than a true transitional passage"². Similarly, Rudolf Bultmann³, Rudolf

¹ Earlier versions of this paper were read at the 2013 meeting of the British New Testament Conference (St. Andrews) and the Biblical Studies Research Seminar at New College, the University of Edinburgh. I am grateful for the helpful feedback offered by various participants.

² C.H. DODD, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge 1976) 235.

³ R. BULTMANN, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament; Göttingen ¹²1952) 91-92.

Schnackenburg⁴, E.C. Hoskyns⁵, Raymond Brown⁶, Ernst Haenchen⁷, Xavier Léon-Dufour⁸, Thomas Brodie⁹, G.R. Beasley-Murray¹⁰, Andreas Köstenberger¹¹, Klaus Wengst¹², Andrew Lincoln¹³, Hartwig Thyen¹⁴, and even the very recent commentary of Ramsay Michaels¹⁵ all hold the view that 2,23-25 functions as the introduction to the Nicodemus pericope.

Other commentators who do not explicitly treat 2,23-25 as introduction to John 3 admit that it is transitional. These scholars include Barnabas Lindars¹⁶, D. Moody Smith¹⁷, Craig Keener¹⁸, and John McHugh¹⁹. Even in the Nestle-Aland 27th and 28th editions of

⁴ R. SCHNACKENBURG, *The Gospel According to St. John* (eds. J.M. FORD – K. SMYTH; trans. K. SMYTH) (New York 1968) I, 360.

⁵ E.C. HOSKYNs, *The Fourth Gospel* (ed. F.N. DAVEY) (London²1947) 210.

⁶ R.E. BROWN, *The Gospel According to John I-XII. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 29; Garden City, NY 1966) 126.

⁷ E. HAENCHEN, *Das Johannesevangelium. Ein Kommentar* (ed. U. BUSSE) (Tübingen 1980) 211.

⁸ X. LÉON-DUFOUR, *Lecture de l'Évangile selon Jean* (Paris 1988) I, 276.

⁹ T.L. BRODIE, *The Gospel According to John. A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Oxford 1993) 195.

¹⁰ G.R. BEASLEY-MURRAY, *John* (WBC; Nashville, TN²1999) 46.

¹¹ A.J. KÖSTENBERGER, *John* (BECNT; Grand Rapids, MI 2004) 113.

¹² K. WENGST, *Das Johannesevangelium. 1. Kapitel 1-10* (TKZNT 2; Stuttgart²2004) 123-124.

¹³ Although Lincoln does briefly mention that 2,23-25 “provides a summary of the response to Jesus’ time”, yet he still considers it transitional and as introduction to 3,1-21. A.T. LINCOLN, *The Gospel According to Saint John* (BNTC; London 2005) 144.

¹⁴ H. THYEN, *Das Johannesevangelium* (HNT 6; Tübingen 2005) 183.

¹⁵ J.R. MICHAELS, *The Gospel of John* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI 2010) 171-172.

¹⁶ B. LINDARS, *The Gospel of John. Based on the Revised Standard Version* (NCB; Grand Rapids, MI 1981) 145.

¹⁷ D.M. SMITH, *John* (ANTC; Nashville, TN 1999) 91, 93.

¹⁸ C.S. KEENER, *The Gospel of John. A Commentary* (Peabody, MA 2003) 531.

¹⁹ J.F. MCHUGH, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on John 1-4* (ed. G.N. STANTON) (ICC; London 2009) 218. J.H. Bernard, in the first edition, did not comment on these verses but put them in one section between his discussion of 2,13-22 and 3,1-15. J.H. BERNARD, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John* (ed. A.H. MCNEILE) (ICC; Edinburgh 1928) 98-99.

the *Greek New Testament*, a new paragraph starts at 2,23, while 3,1 follows after 2,25 without a break, unlike what is in 2,1 and 4,1. Apparently, even the editors of the critical editions see 2,23-25 as a part of the Nicodemus pericope.

A few scholars are more ambiguous in this respect. D.A. Carson is not explicit in commenting on the role of 2,23-25 but connects it to 3,1-15²⁰. Dissecting the preceding context of 2,23-25 as belonging to three different editions and even excising 2,24-25 from the original first edition, Urban von Wahlde ascribes 2,23 to the section 2,23 – 3,10, although 2,23 is also treated as a summary to the fragmented preceding context containing only portions of 1,35 – 2,13²¹.

A different view is held by C.K. Barrett, Francis Moloney, and Gerald Borchert. Barrett attaches 2,23-25 to the section 2,13-25 and not to 3,1-21 but does not offer any further explanation²². Moloney briefly identifies 2,23-25 as a conclusion to the preceding pericope²³. Borchert opines that 2,23-25 provides “a decisive summation concerning Jesus and the nature of believing”; yet he still considers it a “transitional note” or a “linking section/ saddle text”²⁴.

But is the majority view of Johannine scholars, either taking 2,23-25 as an introduction to John 3 or treating it as merely a transition, fully justified? It may be frankly noted that, as with any part of a mature piece of work, it should have connections to both its preceding as well as its following contexts such that 2,23-25 can be seen as an introduction or transition to John 3. But as I will show

²⁰ D.A. CARSON, *The Gospel According to John* (Pillar New Testament Commentary; Downers Grove, IL 1991) 185.

²¹ U.C. VON WAHLDE, *The Gospel and Letters of John*. Vol. 2. The Gospel of John (ECC; Grand Rapids, MI 2010) 120-121.

²² C.K. BARRETT, *The Gospel According to St. John*. An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text (London²1978) 201-202.

²³ “This passage serves as a conclusion to the events and verbal encounter that took place in the Temple (vv.13-22) and also leads into the next example of faith in Israel: Nicodemus (3:1-21)”. F.J. MOLONEY, *The Gospel of John* (SP 4; Collegeville, MN 1998) 84.

²⁴ He believes that Nicodemus “serves as a first-class example of why Jesus did not believe in human believing (2:24)” (Similarly Schnelle). But this view is unconvincing since Jesus identified him as unbelieving in 3,12. G.L. BORCHERT, *John 1–11* (NAC 25A; Nashville, TN 2001) 168, 170; U. SCHNELLE, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (THKNT 4; Leipzig⁴2009), 78.

in this paper, the majority view is not without its problems. Furthermore, the alternative view briefly mentioned by Moloney and Borchert has not been given enough attention. Given some of the key terms used in 2,23-25 for what I call “apprehending” Jesus, namely, seeing, knowing, witnessing, and believing, the role of John 2,23-25 in its preceding context deserves revisiting. John 2,23-25 may well be a precious gem neglected in Johannine scholarship.

II. Evidence from the Earliest Manuscripts

To re-examine the role of 2,23-25, I suggest that the earliest textual evidence should be consulted. Recent scholarship has shown that the earliest biblical manuscripts, both papyri and codices, including those for the Gospel of John, are carefully prepared ²⁵. These manuscripts all betray evidence of sense-unit delimitations, which can help us see the picture from another perspective.

The lines of an ancient Greek text are usually thought to be written in continuous blocks, uncluttered and unbroken, what is called *scriptio continua*. However, unlike an ideal classical literary manuscript, this is not true for the earliest biblical manuscripts ²⁶. Scribes/copyists did introduce sense-unit divisions. This system of division cannot have arisen out of lectionary uses since the sense-unit division predates them. Further, lectionary use alone fails to explain why the lengths of divided sections could vary so significantly ²⁷.

²⁵ For instance, see L.W. HURTADO, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts. Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids, MI 2006); J. CHAPA, “The Early Text of John”, *The Early Text of the New Testament* (eds. C.E. HILL – M.J. KRUGER) (Oxford 2012) 140-156.

²⁶ Compare Aland and Aland’s incorrect comments, “The *scriptio continua* of the original [New Testament] texts not only ignored the division of words, but naturally also lacked any punctuation”, K. ALAND – B. ALAND, *The Text of the New Testament. An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism* (trans. E.F. RHODES) (Grand Rapids, MI ²1989) 287. See the criticism of P. COMFORT, *Encountering the Manuscripts. An Introduction to New Testament Paleography & Textual Criticism* (Nashville, TN 2005) 53.

²⁷ See G. GOSWELL, “Early Readers of the Gospels: The Kephalaia and Titloi of Codex Alexandrinus”, *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism* 6 (2009) 137 n.11; J.R. EDWARDS, “The Hermeneutical Signifi-

Rather, this system of division reflects “a concern to guide and facilitate reading of the texts”²⁸. Although these sense-unit divisions are only of a “rudimentary kind and follow no universally acknowledged system”²⁹, i.e., they are not consistently and uniformly used across all these manuscripts, individual copyists did tend to classify in varying ways different degrees of divisions. Even though a scribal convention was not yet fixed, the practice of marking sense units, as it is claimed, was already developing. What is more, these divisions are not arbitrary. They require the copyist’s judgment and reflect “exegesis of the text in question”³⁰ as they attempt to influence the ancient readers’ reading process. They are interpretations by themselves. Thus, for instance, Peter Williams, tracing the division of the opening verses of John 1, has argued convincingly that 1,1-18 was never treated as the prologue of John in the eyes of ancient copyists³¹. Therefore, for the purpose of the present study, it is worthwhile to examine all the earliest manuscripts so as to determine how the sense-units were perceived by individual copyists. In light of this, the earliest available Greek manuscripts containing the last part of John 2 and the early part of John 3 are chosen, which are Codex Alexandrinus (A), Codex Washingtonianus (W), Codex Vaticanus (B), Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲛ), Papyrus Bodmer XV (P⁷⁵), and Papyrus Bodmer II (P⁶⁶), all dated within the first three centuries of the New Testament era³².

cance of Chapter Divisions in Ancient Gospel Manuscripts”, *NTS* 56 (2010) 417.

²⁸ HURTADO, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 177.

²⁹ TURNER, *Greek Manuscripts*, 8. Also G. CAVALLO – H. MAEHLER (eds.), *Hellenistic Bookhands* (Berlin 2008) 19-24.

³⁰ HURTADO, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 181, 185. As Silviu Tatu comments, these divisions are themselves “a window into the interpretation world of the community that generated the text”. S. TATU, “The Abraham Narrative (Gen. 12:1 – 25:11) in Some Ancient and Mediaeval Manuscripts: The Exegetical Implications of Delimitation Criticism”, *The Impact of Unit Delimitation on Exegesis* (eds. R. DE HOOP – M.C.A. KORPEL – S.E. PORTER) (Pericope: Scripture as Written and Read in Antiquity 7; Leiden 2009) 263.

³¹ P.J. WILLIAMS, “Not the Prologue of John”, *JSNT* 33 (2011) 375-386.

³² Unfortunately, 2,23-25 is absent in the Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus, C.

There are various ways in which copyists delimit units throughout these manuscripts. For the sake of a proper assessment, those delimitation markers that occur in the vicinity of 2,23-25 are listed in the following. This list of different types of delimitation used is by no means exhaustive for the entire manuscripts. In some cases, one kind of marker can be used in combination with another. These delimitation markers are:

1. *Ekthesis* — the first letter of a line protruding into the left margin, sometimes with the first letter enlarged.
2. *Paragraphos* — a simple horizontal stroke placed after the line of a unit and before the next section.
3. Space — extra space deliberately left between words of a line as a mode of punctuation. In these selected manuscripts, spacing is of variable length. It is commonly used to mark the end of a unit. Sometimes, a line is intentionally written short, leaving plenty of space, and *ekthesis* appears in the next line.
4. Dicolon — a double dot placed after certain words functions to divide a text. Dicolon is sometimes used together with *paragraphos*.
5. Stops/ Points — whether placed in the upper, middle position in a line or simply on the line, these stops are used to separate units in minor ways. High stop marks period end; middle stop divides what is inside the period; and underdot differentiates incomplete thoughts.
6. Markers of *kephalaia* — in the margin of some manuscripts, they are markers inscribed to refer to the *kephalaia*, a system of chapter divisions stated at the beginning of a book.
7. Section number — a section numbering system is preserved in the margin of Vaticanus, with unknown origin.
8. Numerals of the Eusebian Canons/ Ammonian Section numbers — markers inscribed in the margin of manuscripts with numbers referring to the tables of the Eusebian Canons, a system of grouping parallel pericopae (Ammonian sections) in the gospels.

1. *Observations*

Bearing in mind the variety of delimitation markers noted above, close observations and analyses of the selected six earliest available Greek manuscripts are presented as follows.

a. Codex Alexandrinus, A (5th c.)³³

2:23 ο ιϛ ως δε ην εν τοις ιερο
 κολυμοις εν τω παρχα εν τη
 ...
 νωκεν τι ην εν τω ανω
 3:1 γ̄3: ~ην δε ανος εκ των φαρισαιω
 ...

In Codex Alexandrinus (A), at 2,22, a space of about the width of three letters is left before 2,23 which marks the end of a unit. But 2,23 does not start in a new line. *Ekthesis* in the next line, with the first letter enlarged, is observed. At 3,1, a new line is started intentionally, leaving the last part of the previous line blank. *Ekthesis* is also found, with the first letter enlarged. A *paragraphos* is inscribed above the protruded letter H together with a *kephalaia* marker (+), which refers to the codex's own table of contents³⁴. Together they signal a new major section according to the codex. Furthermore, a Eusebian Canon marker, original to the codex³⁵, is also found in the left margin. This combination of features clearly shows that the copyist puts a major break into the text at 3,1, especially when one compares it to his treatment at 2,22.

b. Codex Washingtonianus, W (4-5th c.)³⁶

2:23 ο ιϛ . ως δε ην εν τοις ιεροκολυ
 ...
 2:24 ...

³³ While only transcriptions are given here, online images can be viewed at the website provided by the British Library: http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Royal_MS_1_d_viii.

³⁴ See folio 42r of the codex.

³⁵ GOSWELL, "Early Readers of the Gospels", 138 n.18. I am indebted to Dr. William Andrew Smith for pointing out to me that "3: ~" next to "H" was written by Patrick Young, the royal librarian under Charles I, to whom Codex Alexandrinus was given as a gift in the mid-17th century.

³⁶ Online images can be viewed at the Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts: http://csntm.org/manuscript/zoomify/GA_032?image=CodexW_067a.jpg&page=9.

αυτοισ . δια το αυτον γινωσκιν παν

...

εγινωσκεν τι ην εν τω ανω

3:1 ην δε ανος εκ των φαρισεων νικοδη

...

Between 2,22 and 2,23 in Codex Washingtonianus (W), a space of about the width of three letters is left, again, marking the end of a unit. But the presence of an underdot after 2,22 is also observed. Compared with the same use before ΔΙΑ ΤΟ ΑΥΤΟΝ ΓΙΝΩΣΚΙΝ ΠΑΝΤΑΙ in 2,24, the underdot appears to be used to signal an incomplete thought, at least in this locale. Thus, to the copyist, a break is made after 2,22; yet at the same time, the thought is incomplete without 2,23-25. However 3,1, starts in a new line intentionally, leaving the last part of the previous line blank. *Ekthesis* for the first letter of the first word of the verse is observed. The vacant end of the previous line and the presence of *ekthesis* indicate clearly the beginning of a new paragraph.

c. Codex Vaticanus, B (4th c.)³⁷

θ τω λογω ου ειπεν ο ις

2:23 ως δε ην εν τοις ιερο

...

2:24 ποιει αυτος δε ις ουκ ε
πιστευεν αυτον αυτοις

...

σκεν τι ην εν τω ανθρω

3:1 ι πω ην δε ανθρωπος
εκ των φαρεισαιων

...

In Codex Vaticanus (B), based on my transcription, *paragraphos* is used to separate 2,23 from 2,22. Compared to the same *paragraphos* used in 2,24, the break appears not to be major since 2,24 still follows

³⁷ Online images can be viewed at the Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts: http://www.csntm.org/Manuscript/View/GA_03.

2,23 closely in meaning. Nevertheless, a section numbering marker (θ) in deep red ink is observed in the margin next to 2,22³⁸. Together with the *paragraphos*, it shows that a sense-unit is still demarcated. Between 2,25 and 3,1, a *paragraphos* is also used. In the margin, a section numbering marker (ι), following the one in 2,22, is also observed. However, a space of about the width of two to three letters is deliberately left, unlike what is in 2,22 and 2,24. Given Stanley Porter's observation that *ekthesis* is not normally used in Vaticanus³⁹, the combination of an extra blank space, *paragraphos*, and the section numbering marker indicates the presence of a relatively major division, a phenomenon which Dirk Jongkind identifies as a new paragraph in Vaticanus⁴⁰.

d. Codex Sinaiticus, Ⲙ (4th c.)⁴¹

2:23 ο ιϛ · ως δε ην εν
 τοις ιεροσολυμοις ·
 εν τω παρχα εν
 τη εορτη · πολλοι ε
 ...
 πω·

3:1 ην δε ανθρωπος
 ...

In Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲙ), after 2,22, a middle stop is observed. Compared with the similar use of the middle stop after EN TH EOPTH in the vicinity of v. 23b, this indicates a minor break/ interpunction, not a paragraph, since the ΠΟΛΛΟΙ ΕΠΙΣΤΕΥΣΑΝ clause follows the preceding ΩΣ clause closely. Other than this, there is no other mark revealing further sense-unit division. After 2,25, however,

³⁸ Caspar Gregory finds that it is likely to be inscribed by a second hand. C.R. GREGORY, *Textkritik des Neuen Testamentes* (Leipzig 1900) 33.

³⁹ S.E. PORTER, "Pericope Markers in Some Early Greek New Testament Manuscripts", *Layout Markers in Biblical Manuscripts and Ugaritic Tables* (eds. M.C.A. KORPEL – J.M. OESCH) (Pericope: Scripture as Written and Read in Antiquity 5; Assen, Netherlands 2005) 171.

⁴⁰ D. JONGKIND, *Scribal Habits of Codex Sinaiticus* (Piscataway, NJ 2007) 96.

⁴¹ Online images may be viewed on the website: <http://codexsinaiticus.org/en/manuscript.aspx>.

there is a high stop, which indicates a higher-degree break than the previously used middle stop. Also, 3,1 starts in a new line intentionally, leaving a large part of the previous line blank. *Ekthesis* for the first letter of the first word is present. According to Porter and Jongkind, this combination represents a clear paragraph break ⁴². Thus, the break at 3,1 rather than 2,23 is clear.

e. Papyrus Bodmer XV, P⁷⁵ (ca. AD 200-250) ⁴³

2:23 [... ...]ν ο ιϛ' ωϛ δε ην εν τοις ιερο
 [c]ολυμοι[...]ν τω παρχα εν τη εορτ[...]
...
3:1 ην εν τω αυω ην δ[...] αν[ο]ϛ εκ τω
 Φαρισαιων νεικ[...]δημ[...]μα αυτω
...

In Papyrus Bodmer XV (P⁷⁵), a space of about the width of one letter is left with a high stop at the end of 2,22. *Ekthesis* (the first σ in Ἱεροσολύμοις) in the next line is suspected. This appears to be a break of a unit. At the beginning of 3,1, a wider space, about the width of four letters, is left. Such a width of space is quite uncommon when compared with the similar breaks in the vicinity, 1,6.29.35.43; 2,1.23; 3,22 and 4,43 in this papyrus. A clear *ekthesis* for the first character in the next line is observed. However, as a result of the unclear condition after 2,25, the presence of any kind of stop cannot be confirmed. But judging from the wider space together with the *ekthesis*, 3,1 represents a relatively more significant break than 2,23.

f. Papyrus Bodmer II, P⁶⁶ (ca. AD 200-250) ⁴⁴

 ν ειπεν ο ιϛ:
2:23 ωϛ δε ην εν τοις ιεροκολυμοις ε

⁴² JONGKIND, *Scribal Habits of Codex Sinaiticus*, 96. Porter observes that *ekthesis* is consistently used in Sinaiticus to indicate paragraph breaks. PORTER, "Pericope Markers", 171.

⁴³ Online images can be viewed at the New Testament Virtual Manuscript Room: http://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/en_GB/manuscript-workspace.

⁴⁴ Online images can be viewed at the New Testament Virtual Manuscript Room: http://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/en_GB/manuscript-workspace

τω παρχα εν τη εορτη πολλοι ε

3:1

...
ανω · ην δε ανος εκ των φαρισαι
...

In Papyrus Bodmer II (P⁶⁶), John 2,22 ends with a dicolon. 2,23 starts in a new line intentionally, leaving a large part of the previous line blank. *Ekthesis* for the first letter of 2,23 is observed. For this papyrus, however, these features can signal a variety of different degrees of division⁴⁵. Yet, comparing 3,22; 4,1; 7,1 and 10,22, where dicolon and *ekthesis* with a new line started are also used, these betray a major break. On the other hand, the same phenomena at 1,24 and 2,11 do not fit in the sense of a new section very well⁴⁶. At the beginning of 3,1, a middle stop is located. It apparently indicates a relatively minor break, not a paragraph. Thus, 3,1 is connected to 2,25 immediately.

2. Summary of Findings and Implications

Summarizing my observations in these Greek codices and papyri, the results can be tabulated as follows:

	Comparative degree of break between 2,22 and 2,23	Comparative degree of break between 2,25 and 3,1
Codex Alexandrinus, A	Relatively minor	Relatively major
Codex Washingtonianus, W	Relatively minor	Relatively major
Codex Vaticanus, B	Relatively minor	Relatively major
Codex Sinaiticus, Ⲛ	Relatively minor	Relatively major
Papyrus Bodmer XV, P ⁷⁵	Relatively minor	Relatively major
Papyrus Bodmer II, P ⁶⁶	Relatively major	Relatively minor

Table 1: Comparison of the Sense Unit Divisions in the Selected Manuscripts

or, for colour image, FONDATION MARTIN BODMER, *Évangile selon Jean* (introduction and translation by J. ZUMSTEIN) (Cologne – Genève 2008).

⁴⁵ Porter notes that this feature in P⁶⁶ can be used to indicate ancient paragraph division, a conclusion to an episode, as well as the beginning of a new unit, but he does not include 2,23 as one of the “stronger divisions”. PORTER, “Pericope Markers”, 167-168.

⁴⁶ Thus, Porter claims that the marker at 1,24 indicates “a sub-unit within a larger unit”. Ibid., 167.

From the above table, two conclusions can be drawn.

First of all, there is always a relative difference in the degree of breaks between 2,22-23 and 2,25-3,1. There is not a single manuscript showing that the breaks used in these two locations are completely equal. This means that 2,23-25 never existed as a discrete sense-unit comparable to the preceding or the following pericope; it is always a unit closely linked to either its preceding context or following context. Such delimitation appears to require the readers' judgment that takes 2,23-25 as more than something merely transitional (by contrast, for the transitional statement in 2,12, the textual evidence from these selected manuscripts is apparently more ambiguous and divided).

Secondly, with the exception of \mathfrak{P}^{66} , which has a new paragraph at 2,23 and not 3,1, the rest of the earliest available textual witnesses (\mathfrak{P}^{75} , \aleph , A, B, and W) all show otherwise: 3,1 represents a new section and a major break, but not 2,23. It has been commented that \mathfrak{P}^{66} is copied by a "careless scribe" based on the "numerous errors and a large number of singular editorial changes"⁴⁷. The fact that the initial draft of \mathfrak{P}^{66} has not been copied very accurately may also suggest the same for its sense-unit delimitations. Since the paragraphs have to be set during the initial transcription, they cannot be easily altered afterwards, unlike one or two letters/words. At any rate, even putting aside this possible explanation for the exception of \mathfrak{P}^{66} , still, five out of six available witnesses support the view that 2,23-25 does not belong to the Nicodemus pericope starting at 3,1⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ P.M. HEAD, "Scribal Behavior and Theological Tendencies in Singular Readings in P. Bodmer II (P66)", *Textual Variation. Theological and Social Tendencies? Papers from the Fifth Birmingham Colloquium on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (eds. D.C. PARKER – H.A.G. HOUGHTON) (Texts and Studies 6; Piscataway, NJ 2008) 60. But note that subsequent corrections made by the same scribe show that it is still rather carefully checked. See J.R. ROYSE, *Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri* (NTTSD 36; Leiden 2008) 498.

⁴⁸ These textual witnesses reflect traditions they inherited and can be reasonably treated as discrete regarding sense-unit delimitation. In terms of the manuscripts' content, only \mathfrak{P}^{75} and B have a close textual affinity. Yet, the papyri, in general, confirm "diversification of the text associated with the copying process in early manuscripts" (Chapa), whereas the early codices are gathered from "previously independent and isolated codices" (Elliott). C.L. PORTER, "Papyrus Bodmer XV (P75) and the Text of Codex

From these findings on the placement of 2,23-25 in its manuscript context, two further points can be deduced on the origin of such phenomena:

1. It is either the copyists' own individual decisions on the delimitation, or
2. It is the influence of their exemplars as they faithfully represent the phenomena by their own means.

These imply that either these copyists, as early readers of the Gospel, considered 2,23-25 as belonging to the previous context, or the exemplars they used reflect an earlier textual tradition that treated 2,23-25 as belonging to the previous context. Of course, these two implications need not be mutually exclusive. Assuming that the phenomenon is purely an interpretive act made by these early copyists, even so, our survey has sufficiently shown the presence of a living tradition of interpretation, namely, five out of six witnesses testify that 2,23-25 belongs to the preceding context, and not to the following. Such appears to be the majority view of the earliest interpreters according to the textual evidence. They intend to guide readers to read the text in this particular way, contrary to what is found in the Nestle-Aland 27th and 28th editions of the Greek New Testament.

III. Reflection and Proposal: 2,23-25 as an Anticlimactic Concluding Remark

In reaction to the near consensus of modern commentaries on the role of John 2,23-25, I turned to the ancient manuscripts dated from ca. 200 to the 5th c. to search for early interpretations embedded in the sense-unit delimitations. Based on the findings, I argued

Vaticanus", *JBL* 81 (1962) 363-76; J.K. ELLIOTT, "T.C. Skeat on the Dating and Origin of Codex Vaticanus", *New Testament Textual Criticism. The Application of Thoroughgoing Principles: Essays on Manuscripts and Textual Variation* (NovTSup 137; Leiden 2010) 67; CHAPA, "The Early Text of John", 140. The representativeness of the wide-spread phenomenon we observed here is further supported by another fact that, according to Houghton's article, twenty Old Latin manuscripts have a division in 3,1 but not 2,23; only one has divisions in both 2,23 and 3,1; only one has division in 2,23 but not 3,1. H.A.G. HOUGHTON, "Chapter Divisions, Capitula Lists, and the Old Latin Versions of John", *RBén* 121 (2011) 351.

that: (1) in the earliest transmission of 2,23-25, a merely transitional understanding of its role appears not to be fully adequate; (2) most of the earliest manuscripts present 2,23-25 as connected to the preceding context, rather than the following one.

Both of these suggestions run against the dominant views of modern commentators. From a narrative perspective, however, the observed delimitation of 2,23-25, being connected to the preceding context, could actually shed more light on the understanding of its role in John 1-2.

1. *Problems with the Majority View of the Modern Commentators*

In order to demonstrate this, the problems with the majority view of the modern commentators have to be noted first. Superficially, 2,23 appears to be just a transitional statement like 2,12-13, both providing a location (Jerusalem, vv. 13, 23) and time (Passover, vv. 13, 23) for the narrative. Besides, phrases in 3,1 and 3,2 seem to be linked to 2,23-25. The “man” (ἄνθρωπος) Nicodemus in 3,1 seems to connect to the statement that Jesus knew “what was in man” in 2,25 (τί ἦν ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ). Nicodemus mentioning the “signs” Jesus was doing (τὰ σημεῖα... ἃ σὺ ποιεῖς) appears to be linked to those who believed Jesus when they saw the same “signs” that Jesus did in 2,23 (τὰ σημεῖα ἃ ἐποίησεν). The echoes seem clear.

Nonetheless, ἦν δέ τις ἄνθρωπος also appears in 5,5 (cf. 11,1) to introduce a character. This shows that the use of ἄνθρωπος in 3,1 remains natural enough ⁴⁹, not as strongly connected to 2,23-25 as one may think. Furthermore, Nicodemus is never said to have believed throughout 3,1-15. On the contrary, Jesus’ rhetorical question to Nicodemus in 3,12, “how will you believe?” (πῶς... πιστεύετε;) strongly suggests that Nicodemus was apparently a non-believer at that moment. When one compares 3,12 with 5,47, both represent Jesus’ comment towards the end of the pericope, with a close affinity of wording used:

- 3,12 εἰ τὰ ἐπίγεια εἶπον ὑμῖν καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε, πῶς ἂν
εἴπω ὑμῖν τὰ ἐπουράνια πιστεύετε;
5,47 εἰ δὲ τοῖς ἐκείνου γράμμασιν οὐ πιστεύετε, πῶς τοῖς
ἐμοῖς ῥήμασιν πιστεύετε;

⁴⁹ I am indebted to Dr. Ruth Edwards for bringing out this point.

If, then, in 5,47 the Jews whom Jesus was talking to are apparently unbelieving, there is no reason to consider the Nicodemus in 3,12 as believing, since he is subjected to the same criticism. Of course, this does not mean that Nicodemus would remain unchanged after 3,12, especially in light of 7,50 and 19,39.

In addition to these two points, from a wider context 2,23-25 has closer verbal connections with 1,35 – 2,22 than with 3,1-15. A number of important key terms in these three verses find their echoes in the preceding pericopae: (1) the believing motif in 2,23 echoes the same motif found at the end of the previous pericopae of the Temple cleansing, the wedding at Cana, and the calling of the first disciples (1,50; 2,11.22); (2) the seeing-signs motif in 2,23 echoes the same motif in the pericopae of the Temple cleansing and the wedding at Cana (2,11.18); (3) the knowing and believing motifs in 2,24-25 are the reversal of the same motifs in these three previous pericopae (1,48.50; 2,9.11; 2,18.22); (4) the witnessing motif in 2,25 represents a clarification of the role of different witnesses in these sections.

Given these narrative echoes, the repetition of location and time in 2,13 and 2,23 can be read as reminders to the readers that the story has not yet ended. Thus, from a narrative point of view, although the subject seems to have shifted from the “disciples” in the previous pericopae to the “many” (πολλοί) in 2,23, important conceptual linkages still remain. The author still has something to say before going on to the next pericope. These narrative linkages deserve further exegetical reflection in light of the motifs used in 2,23-25.

2. Narrative Linkages with the Previous Context

a. The seeing-signs-and-belief motif

In 2,23, the author mentions that many people saw Jesus’ “signs” (θεωροῦντες αὐτοῦ τὰ σημεῖα ἃ ἐποίει 2,23), just as his disciples did in 2,11 (ἐποίησεν ἀρχὴν τῶν σημείων). Both the crowd and the disciples appear to have believed in Jesus’ name (ἐπίστευσαν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ) (2,23 cf. v. 11) in the manner that is required in 1,12 (πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ). From the perspective of the development of the narrative, faith in signs appears not altogether useless by itself. At least the disciples belonged to this category. The negative evaluation of the faith here may not be because of signs. It is not because of the people themselves either. This is

because the same portrayal of people believing in Jesus will be repeated in John 4, where the same πολλοί in conjunction with πιστεύω is used (πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτὸν, 4,39), being strikingly similar to 2,23 here (πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ). Yet Jesus did not criticize their faith. Thus, contrary to many commentators, the author provides no clues in the narrative for us to identify the faith of these people as “shallow” or “inauthentic”. To use 2,23-25 as a proof that any faith based on signs (“signs faith”) is rejected by the author seems to underestimate the real complexity encoded in this final form of the Gospel⁵⁰. Quite the opposite, the portrayal of their faith, though based on signs, falls into line with what the author has been persuading the reader about so far (1,12; 2,11). At the very least, the disciples are the ones who believe Jesus upon seeing signs, which suggests that the negative judgment made by Jesus in 2,24 should actually be explained differently. The author’s use of the knowing motif, as I will argue in the following section, provides a solution to it.

b. The knowing motif

The difference reflected in Jesus’ judgment, I assert, hinges not on the so-called “signs faith”, but on Jesus’ own authoritative discernment. In an anticlimactic way, the author is trying to correct a naïve distinction of believing versus unbelieving, an impression one may have after reading 1,35 – 2,22, the conversion of the first disciples. The author tries to correct this naïve distinction by linking the seeing-signs-and-belief motif to the motif of Jesus’ knowing. He wants to show that the way people get to know and believe in Jesus, the disciples and the people alike, is neither totally their own autonomous free choice nor discerned only from their outward response. The discernment rests exclusively upon Jesus himself. In these few verses, the author stresses that one truly knows Jesus only

⁵⁰ *Contra* BULTMANN, *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, 92; BROWN, *John I-XII*, 127; SCHNACKENBURG, *John I*, 358. For a view similar to mine, see M. DE JONGE, *Jesus, Stranger from Heaven and Son of God*. Jesus Christ and the Christians in Johannine Perspective (trans. J.E. STEELY) (SBLSPS 11; Missoula, MT 1977) 136; M.M. THOMPSON, *The Humanity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* (Philadelphia 1988) 63-64; W.H. SALIER, *The Rhetorical Impact of the Semeia in the Gospel of John* (WUNT II/186; Tübingen 2004) 53; LINCOLN, *John*, 144-145.

when Jesus recognizes that. True faith, like that of the disciples, goes hand in hand with Jesus' omniscience. This is shown characteristically in the reversal of the knowing motif here. In the previous pericopae, different people came to know Jesus in various ways, but it is only Jesus who "knows" (γινώσκω) "all" people (πάντας v. 24b) and what is really in them (τί ἦν ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, v. 25b). The fact that πᾶς and ἄνθρωπος are used in 2,24 shows that the author is no longer talking about a specific group of people but, in a generic sense, everyone including the people and the disciples alike. By this, the faith of the crowd (πολλοί) and the faith of the disciples are both included and yet distinguished as Jesus knows them all ⁵¹.

c. The πιστεύω wordplay

Along this line of thought, the wordplay involving πιστεύω in 2,23-24 is similarly subtle. Dodd considers the transitive use of πιστεύω in 2,24 to be "without any special significance" ⁵². Yet this is the only instance in John in which Jesus is the subject of the verb πιστεύω. Borchert rightly pointed out the sense here: that "Jesus did not believe their believing" ⁵³. Thus, Jesus' refusal to "believe" is actually contradicting the people's "believing". This is significant and strategic in John. With the reversal of the believing motif put in such a remarkable way, 2,23-24 becomes incisively an anticlimax to all the faith passages one has seen so far (1,35 – 2,22). The main ground for Jesus' distrust, οὐκ ἐπίστευεν, is his omniscience noted above, a divine characteristic echoing 1,1-5, where Jesus was explicitly called God.

d. The witnessing motif

In addition to the contrast with the use of πιστεύω mentioned above, another set of contrasts involving "bearing witness" (μαρτυρέω)

⁵¹ Here the author paves the way for an utterly false faith in 8,31-47. In Brown's analysis of the vocabulary and various stages of faith in John, the significance of Jesus' omniscience and its relation to his πιστεύω are unfortunately missing. BROWN, *John I–XII*, 512-14, 530-31. Similarly, MCHUGH, *John I–4*, 219. Michaels, in this regard, shares a similar view with me although he does not see 2:23-25 as primarily connected to chapter 2. MICHAELS, *John*, 173-175.

⁵² DODD, *Historical Tradition*, 179.

⁵³ BORCHERT, *John I–11*, 168.

is also in motion here. From the previous pericopae, readers have seen different characters (from John the Baptist to the disciples) bearing witness to Jesus (μαρτυρία / μαρτυρέω 1,7.8.15.32.34). Although μαρτυρέω terms are not directly applied to the disciples, their confessions of Jesus' identity and bringing people to Jesus (1,41.45.49) already function undoubtedly under the rubric of testimony language. Yet, conversely, the author mentions that Jesus needs no one to bear witness about man (οὐ χρεῖαν εἶχεν ἵνα τις μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, 2,25). Jesus' divine attribute, contrasting with the limitation of the characters' need of testimony in the narrative, is again stressed here (cf. 1,1.18).

3. *Summary and Proposal*

Thus, summarizing my discussion so far, 2,23-25 partly concludes the previous pericopae by adding further nuances to the apprehension of Jesus, that is, how Jesus is being known in terms of seeing, knowing, believing, and witnessing. These verses correct a probable false impression: that a professing faith based on signs is automatically or necessarily true by itself. These verses give hints that some professing faith could be unreliable. Thus, with these anticlimactic remarks, the positive apprehensions of Jesus by the characters in 1,29 – 2,22 are counterbalanced by the negative depiction of the faith of the people here (πολλοί). John 2,23-25, as explained in terms of the narrative linkages discussed in this paper, functions more importantly as a clarifying and concluding remark to the preceding 1,35 – 2,22 though in an anticlimactic way. It is neither merely transitional nor introductory to the Nicodemus pericope as many modern Johannine commentators claim.

* *

*

This paper revisits the role of 2,23-25 in the first few chapters of the Gospel of John. Having surveyed the viewpoints of recent commentaries and observed some inadequacies, I examined the sense-unit delimitation in the earliest Greek papyri and codices. From these earliest textual witnesses, I observed a phenomenon at odds with the predominant view of modern commentators. The significance of these findings, pointing to the interpretative acts of the

copyists, was then discussed. Subsequently, from a narrative perspective, I highlighted the thematic linkages of 2,23-25 to 1,35 – 2,22. John 2,23-25 should better be seen as an anticlimactic concluding remark. Such an analysis, in return, helps us to understand why it seemed appropriate to the earliest readers/copyists of the Gospel to have ascribed 2,23-25 to the previous context. With the result of the present investigation, it is hoped that the role of 2,23-25 in John 1–2 can be clarified by the interpretive insights embedded in the oldest available textual witnesses. These papyri and codices still speak today.

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SUMMARY

This paper revisits the role of John 2,23-25 in its literary and manuscript context. Contrary to many Johannine commentators who take it as an introduction to the Nicodemus pericope, 2,23-25 should be linked more to the preceding context, not the following. This view is supported by evidence from the sense-unit delimitations observed in the Greek papyri and codices dated within ca. 300 years from the New Testament era. Viewed from a narrative perspective, 2,23-25 should be seen as an anticlimactic concluding remark connected to 1,35 – 2,22.

ANIMADVERSIONES

The Agent of *hesed* in Naomi's Blessing (Ruth 2,20) *

I. Introduction: syntactic ambiguities in Ruth 2,20

Commentators and linguists give some attention to the first sentence of Ru 2,20 because of its syntactic ambiguities. The paragraph in which this verse is embedded (vv. 18-23) can be summarized as follows. Ruth comes back home from Boaz's field with the grain she gleaned and the leftovers from the meal he shared with her. Naomi, surprised by what her daughter-in-law has brought home, asks her where she worked that day and blesses the benefactor. Then Ruth reveals his name. The new information triggers Naomi's additional, longer blessing which is phrased as follows:

ברוך הוא ליהוה אשר לא־עזב חסדו את־החיים ואת־המתים (Ru 2,20)

Two syntactic ambiguities have been noticed in this blessing ¹. One concerns the antecedent of the relative pronoun אשר. The other is about the subject of the subordinate clause. Unlike the former ambiguity, the resolution of the latter does not make a significant difference to the understanding of the utterance. That is, we can hardly find a meaningful difference between "[...] whose faithfulness did not abandon the living and the dead" and "[...] who did not abandon his faithfulness with the living and the dead". In addition, the identity of "who/whose" can only be determined by the resolution of the former ambiguity.

Therefore, this article focuses on the ambiguity regarding the antecedent of the relative pronoun. After examining ancient and modern translations of the sentence, we will discuss the syntactic and semantic arguments to disentangle the ambiguity. Then the matter will be discussed in a broader context.

* This work was supported by a research grant from Seoul Women's University (2012).

¹ B.A. REBERA, "Yahweh or Boaz? Ruth 2.20 Reconsidered", *BT* 36 (1985) 317-327, here 317.

1. *Ancient and modern translations*

Let us look at the Greek and Latin versions of the blessing.

εὐλογητός ἐστὶν τῷ κυρίῳ ὅτι οὐκ ἐγκατέλιπεν τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ
μετὰ τῶν ζώντων καὶ μετὰ τῶν τεθνηκότων (LXX)

Blessed is he to the Lord because he did not abandon his mercy with
the living and with the dead.

*benedictus sit a Domino quoniam eandem gratiam quam praeberat
viviis servavit et mortuis* (Vulgate)

Blessed be he to the Lord because the same kindness as he had shown
to the living he kept even to the dead.

Both the versions translate the Hebrew relative pronoun אשר as a causal conjunction (ὅτι and *quoniam*, respectively). The Vulgate seems to depend on the LXX in some respects, though the latter is the more literal. To our disappointment, the subject of the subordinate clause is not specified in either version. B.A. Rebera observes that the LXX “leaves no doubt” and the Vulgate “unambiguously supports the contention” that the subject of the Hebrew relative clause (agent of *hesed*) is Boaz, not YHWH². However, without a specified subject, we cannot assert that both the versions are unambiguous on this matter. Campbell acknowledges that “the Greek retains the ambiguity [...]”³. Sasson also states that “LXX is equally as ambiguous as the Hebrew text, and thus offers no succor in this respect”⁴. Aramaic versions do not help in our discussion. While Targum reproduces the ambiguity of the Hebrew, Peshitta leaves out “he (=Boaz)” in the main clause (“Blessed is the Lord, who has not [...]”), presumably to resolve the ambiguity in favor of YHWH⁵.

² REBERA, “Yahweh or Boaz?”, 324-325.

³ E.F. CAMPBELL, JR., *Ruth*. A New Translation with Introduction, Notes, and Commentary (AB 7; Garden City, NY 1975) 106.

⁴ J. SASSON, *Ruth*. A New Translation with a Philological Commentary and a Formalist-Folklorist Interpretation (Sheffield 1989) 60.

⁵ See M. COHEN, “*Hesed*: Divine or Human? The Syntactic Ambiguity of Ruth 2:20”, *Hazon Nahum*. Studies in Jewish Law, Thought, and History Presented to Dr. Norman Lamm (eds. Y. ELMAN – J.S. GUROCK) (Hoboken, NJ 1997) 11-38, here 21-25.

Most modern translations imply that the subject is YHWH ⁶.

Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. (*King James Version*)

Blessed be he by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead! (*New Revised Standard Version*)

One German translation goes even further, specifying the subject as YHWH.

Der HERR segne ihn! Jetzt sehe ich, dass der HERR uns nicht im Stich gelassen hat, uns Lebende nicht und nicht unsere Toten. (*Gute Nachricht Bibel*)

However, a few modern translations seem to identify Boaz as the subject of the subordinate clause ⁷.

The LORD bless him! [...] He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead. (*New International Version*)

In sum, the ancient translations do not offer a decisive clue for the resolution of the structural ambiguity in the source language of Ru 2,20, nor do modern translations display agreement on this issue.

⁶ For other examples, see *American Standard Version* (1901), *Revised Standard Version* (1952), *La Nouvelle Édition de Genève* (1977), *New King James Version* (1982), *La Bible en français courant* (1982), *Luther Bibel* (1984), *New Jewish Publication Society of America Tanakh* (1985), *New Jerusalem Bible* (1985), *La Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible* (1988), *New American Standard Bible* (1995), and *English Standard Version* (2001). Given the “ambiguous” nature of the matter, the choice that most modern translations have made is rather unusual.

⁷ *Douay-Rheims American Edition* (1899), *New English Translation* (2005), and *New Living Translation* (2007). Interestingly, most Korean translations understand the agent as Boaz. All the official versions that the Korean Bible Society has published agree on this point: *New Korean Revised Version* (1998), *Revised Common Translation* (1999), and *Revised New Korean Standard Version* (2001). Only *Korean New Revised Version* (2005) published by the Catholic Bishop's Conference of Korea has opted for YHWH. This preference for Boaz cannot be attributed to the grammatical structure of the language. Despite the similarity in syntactic structure between Korean and Japanese, major Japanese translations such as *Colloquial Translation* (1954), *New Japanese Bible* (2003), and *New Interconfessional Version* (1987) have all chosen YHWH.

2. The ambiguity of the sentence in Hebrew

(Ru 2,20) ברוך הוא ליהוה אשר לא־עזב חסדו את־החיים ואת־המתים

The relative pronoun (אשר) and the pronominal suffix (-ו) are coreferential. The problem is the existence of two possible antecedents for these grammatical elements, i.e., “YHWH (יהוה)” and “he (הוא)”. As we have seen above in the discussion of modern translations, consensus has not been reached on this problem. Even the medieval Jewish tradition does not offer a unified voice. While Yepheth, the tenth-century Karaite exegete, was open to both syntactic options, Ibn Ezra (1089-1164) and Rashi (1040-1105) differed from each other, the former in favor of Boaz and the latter in favor of YHWH⁸. Recently Rebera has made a strong case in favor of Boaz as the referent, persuading commentators such as Hubbard⁹. Bush also states that “it seems unquestionable that Boaz is the antecedent [...]”¹⁰. In addition, LaCocque judges that “the problem seems resolved [...]”¹¹. However, the alternative opinion in favor of YHWH is still being firmly supported¹². Furthermore, some scholars, instead of focusing on the search for the referent, turn their attention to the ambiguity of the blessing¹³. There is no proof that the author intentionally meant

⁸ See COHEN, “*Hesed*”, 13-21.

⁹ REBERA, “Yahweh or Boaz?” 317-327; R.L. HUBBARD, JR., *The Book of Ruth* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, MI 1988) 186.

¹⁰ F. BUSH, *Ruth, Esther* (WBC 9; Dallas, TX 1996) 136.

¹¹ A. LACOCQUE, *Ruth. A Continental Commentary* (trans. K.C. HANSON) (Continental Commentaries; Minneapolis, MN 2004) 77 n. 37. For a recent work that follows this option, see P.H.W. LAU, *Identity and Ethics in the Book of Ruth. A Social Identity Approach* (BZAW 416; Berlin – New York 2010) 129.

¹² See, e.g., G.R. CLARK, *The Word Hesed in the Hebrew Bible* (JSOTS 157; Sheffield 1993) 200-201; K. NIELSEN, *Ruth* (OTL; Louisville, KY 1997) 62-63; I.M. DUGUID, *Esther and Ruth* (Reformed Expository Commentary; Phillipsburg, NJ 2005) 162; I. FISCHER, *Rut* (HTKAT; Freiburg im Breisgau – Basel – Wien 2001) 189; M. KÖHLMÖS, *Ruth* (ATD 9,3; Göttingen 2010) 49; T.C. ESKENAZI – T. FRYMER-KENSKY, *Ruth* (JPS Bible Commentary; Philadelphia, PA 2011) 43.

¹³ For example, see K.D. SAKENFELD, *Ruth* (IBC; Louisville, KY 1999) 47; C.J. COLLINS, “Ambiguity and Theology in Ruth: Ruth 1:21 and 2:20”, *Presbyterion* 19.2 (1993) 97-102; M.E.W. THOMPSON, “New Life Amid the Alien Corn: The Book of Ruth”, *EvQ* 65 (1993) 205, 210; COHEN, “*Hesed*”, 32-38; H. ANGEL, “A Midrashic View of Ruth: Amidst a Sea of Ambiguity”, *JBQ* 33 (2005) 91-99; R.D. HOLMSTEDT, *Ruth. A Handbook on the Hebrew Text* (Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible; Waco, TX 2010) 142; K.M. SAXEGAARD, *Character Complexity in the Book of Ruth* (Tübingen 2010) 168-169.

the ambiguity here. Though one may study the ambiguity for literary or theological understanding of the text, the fact remains that "Naomi knows who she was referring to, either Yahweh or Boaz" ¹⁴.

If the implicit agent of *ḥesed* is YHWH, the subordinate clause expresses the praise of YHWH ¹⁵. According to this understanding, Naomi, who revealed her bitterness toward YHWH, is now confessing that YHWH has not abandoned *ḥesed* with her family, both the living and the dead. Eskenazi and Frymer-Kensky reason that the relative pronoun cannot refer to Boaz because nothing suggests that Boaz has done *ḥesed* to Naomi's husband while he was alive ¹⁶.

On the other hand, if the implicit agent of *ḥesed* is Boaz, the relative clause can be interpreted as providing grounds for blessing Boaz. According to this understanding, Boaz displays special kindness toward Ruth by granting her more rights and privileges than normal gatherers could expect from the landowner. As Campbell puts it, "the Ruth story is basically about extraordinary caring and concern, kindness that is above and beyond the call of duty" ¹⁷.

II. Syntactic issues

In the expression "לְ [...] בָּרוּךְ", the preposition לְ is traditionally taken to mark the noun it governs as the agent of the blessing ¹⁸. However, Pardee suggests that "לְ [...] בָּרוּךְ" is the passivized form of "בָּרַךְ לְ A בְּ" (literally, "bless A to B" or "recommend A for blessing to B"), which expresses "a verbal blessing, directed to a deity" ¹⁹. In this vein, Waltke and O'Connor translate our clause as "May he be pronounced blessed to YHWH", categorizing the verb בָּרַךְ as a verb of speaking ²⁰. Joüon – Muraoka acknowledge the usage proposed by Pardee, but still understand the preposition לְ in Ru 2,20 as the marker of agent ²¹. Bush states that Pardee's argument would make a strong case for Boaz as the agent of *ḥesed*, since in that case the אֲשֶׁר clause would be a causal clause that gives

¹⁴ SAXEGAARD, *Character Complexity*, 169.

¹⁵ W. RUDOLPH, *Das Buch Ruth, Das Hohe Lied, Die Klagelieder* (KAT; Gütersloh 1962) 51.

¹⁶ ESKENAZI – FRYMER-KENSKY, *Ruth*, 43.

¹⁷ CAMPBELL, *Ruth*, 110.

¹⁸ GKC, §121f; P. JOÜON, *Grammaire de l'hébreu biblique* (Rome ²1996) §132f.

¹⁹ D.G. PARDEE, "The Preposition in Ugaritic", *UF* 8 (1976) 221-223.

²⁰ B.K. WALTKE – M. O'CONNOR, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN 1990) 206-207.

²¹ P. JOÜON – T. MURAOKA, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (SubBi 27; Rome ²2009) §132fn. 5.

grounds on which to base the recommendation of Boaz to YHWH, rather than a relative clause modifying the antecedent YHWH²². Bush's argument presupposes that, if the agent of *hesed* is YHWH, the clause in question is likely to be causal with **אשר** as a subordinating conjunction, while if the agent is Boaz, it is likely to be a relative clause with **אשר** as a relative pronoun. Yet syntactically analyzing the **אשר** clause as causal is not without problem. Though many ancient and modern translations express causal relationship between the main and the **אשר** clauses, the relation is not syntactically marked in the original language. As Holmstedt convincingly shows, the **אשר** clause in biblical Hebrew can best be analyzed as either a relative or a complement clause²³. In our case it must be analyzed as a relative clause, though its content can be interpreted as the grounds for the blessing.

The antecedent of the relative clause is either **יהוה** or **הוא**. Holmstedt raises the possibility of YHWH being the antecedent of the relative clause. He reasons that "it is an overwhelming tendency in the syntax of relative clauses that, unless explicitly identified (e.g., by the use of **בעז** within the relative) or a clear result of syntactic movement (e.g., the relative head fronted and thus moved away from its relative clause), the nearest grammatically acceptable antecedent is the relative head"²⁴. However, if we examine the syntax of the sentence, there is enough reason for "**הוא** (= Boaz)", though not the nearest to the relative head (= relative pronoun), to be an antecedent. An explanation would be the movement of the antecedent from its original position just before the relative pronoun to the current position²⁵.

* ברוך ליהוה הוא אשר לא־עזב חסדו את־החיים ואת־המתים
→ ברוך הוא ליהוה אשר לא־עזב חסדו את־החיים ואת־המתים

Another, more plausible explanation would be the movement (extraposition) of the relative clause. That is, the relative clause has been moved from its original position just after the antecedent **הוא** to the current position because it is considerably longer. It would be odd to see the long relative clause placed between "he (**הוא**)" and "by YHWH (**ליהוה**)".

* ברוך הוא אשר לא־עזב חסדו את־החיים ואת־המתים ליהוה
→ ברוך הוא ליהוה אשר לא־עזב חסדו את־החיים ואת־המתים

²² BUSH, *Ruth*, 136; REBERA, "Yahweh or Boaz?" 323.

²³ R.D. HOLMSTEDT, "Headlessness and Extraposition: Another Look at the Syntax of **אשר**", *JNSL* 27 (2001) 8-13.

²⁴ HOLMSTEDT, *Ruth*, 141-142.

²⁵ See HOLMSTEDT, "Headlessness and Extraposition", 9-12 for examples of extraposition in Biblical Hebrew.

Therefore, the position of the antecedent, at least in this case, cannot serve as a conclusive argument.

Expressions with a similar structure could shed light on our structural analysis. Those favoring YHWH as the agent have adduced Gen 24,27 as a basis for their choice ²⁶. Yet those favoring Boaz cite 2 Sam 2,5 as a more adequate parallel ²⁷.

ברוך יהוה אלהי אדני אברהם אשר לא־עזב חסדו ואמתו מעם אדני
Blessed be YHWH the God of my lord Abraham,
who did not abandon his faithfulness
and his truth from my lord! (Gen 24,27)

ברכים אתם ליהוה אשר עשיתם החסד הזה עם־אדניכם עם־שאול
May you (2d. pl.) be blessed by YHWH who showed (2d. pl.)
this faithfulness to your lord Saul. (2 Sam 2,5)

Both the above "blessings" appear to be good parallels to Naomi's blessing. Gen 24,27 contains the same verb (לֹא־עִזַּב) as Ru 2,20, while 2 Sam 2,5 shares the same structure ("blessed" + independent pronoun + לִיהוֹה) with it. However, the latter blessing aims at certain people, while the former is a praise of God rather than a blessing per se. Moreover, even in Gen 24,27 the antecedent of the relative pronoun is "YHWH" not "Abraham", which stands in immediate proximity to it.

There are also cases where the speaker blesses people by using a divine name, which is followed by an epithet.

ברוכים אתם ליהוה עשה שמים וארץ
May you be blessed by YHWH,
maker of heaven and earth. (Ps 115,15)

ברוך אברהם לאל עליון קנה שמים וארץ
Blessed be Abraham by God Most High,
creator of heaven and earth. (Gen 14,19)

In the above blessings, "YHWH" is not modified by a relative clause but placed in apposition with the participle. Here the praise of YHWH is "incidental" and thus cannot be used as supporting evidence for reading YHWH as the agent of *ḥesed* in Ru 2,20 ²⁸.

²⁶ K.D. SAKENFELD, *The Meaning of Hesed in the Hebrew Bible*. A New Inquiry (HSM 17; Missoula, MT 1978) 106.

²⁷ N. GLUECK, *Hesed in the Bible* (trans. A. GOTTSCHALK; ed. E.L. EPSTEIN) (Cincinnati, OH 1967) 41; REBERA, "Yahweh or Boaz?" 321-323.

²⁸ COHEN, "*Hesed*", 30-31.

Our syntactic analysis favors Boaz as the agent of *hesed*. However, we need to allow for the author's liberty to produce unique expressions using similar structures. As Sakenfeld acknowledges, "no definitive decision is possible from analogies of grammar and vocabulary alone"²⁹. Now let us turn to other factors.

III. *hesed* for the living and the dead

In the context of the whole story, what is the meaning of "[...] who did not abandon his faithfulness with the living and the dead"? The expression "the living and the dead" certainly refers to the living and dead members of Naomi's family³⁰. If YHWH is the unspecified subject, what does this clause mean? According to Rudolph, the death of Naomi's husband and sons in an unclean foreign land meant YHWH's testimony against both Naomi and the deceased. Now, by bestowing grace upon Naomi and Ruth, YHWH also restores the honor of their deceased loved ones³¹. However, no inference can be made from the text that the death of Elimelech and his two sons meant divine punishment. Their death is simply reported: no reason or background information is given that could justify this interpretation.

Sakenfeld argues that Boaz's actions cannot without doubt be interpreted as *hesed* to the dead husband. According to her interpretation, "God's *hesed* is the primary focus of attention at this point in the story" and "Boaz'[s] actions thus far cannot readily be described as *hesed*"³². It is true that YHWH's *hesed* is one of the important themes in the story. But it has not been mentioned explicitly throughout the story. YHWH's *hesed* is never described as a past event, though it is prayed for in Naomi's earlier blessing (Ru 1,8). It is also problematic to argue that Boaz's action

²⁹ SAKENFELD, *Hesed*, 106.

³⁰ Campbell argues that this expression does not refer to specific individuals because "the living" is a masculine plural. Yet Joüon identifies the living as Naomi and Ruth, adducing a case (Gen 23,3) where "the dead" in the masculine form (נָתַת) is employed in reference to a female. Rebera shows that the replacement of the feminine plural with the masculine plural takes place in the Book of Ruth and other places in the Old Testament and that the feminine plural of נָתַת is not attested with reference to human females. See CAMPBELL, *Ruth*, 106; P. JOÜON, *Ruth. Commentaire philologique et exégétique* (Rome 1953) 64; REBERA, "Yahweh or Boaz?", 320-321.

³¹ RUDOLPH, *Ruth*, 51.

³² Sakenfeld goes further to suggest that those actions of Boaz cannot be regarded as *hesed* even to Ruth herself. Some midrashim suggest that Boaz performed the acts of kindness unwillingly and ungenerously. See SAKENFELD, *Hesed* 106; ANGEL, "A Midrashic View", 96.

falls short of the concept of *ḥesed*. Allowing Ruth to glean among the sheaves, leaving extra for her, inviting her to share his meal, and instructions to his servants in her favor go beyond what the law requires of him. Even Campbell, who is on the side of "YHWH", views Boaz's earlier deeds as acts of *ḥesed*³³.

What the expression "*ḥesed* for the dead" refers to cannot be determined on the basis of the present form of the story. In the preceding episodes, neither Boaz nor YHWH are reported to have done anything to the dead during their lifetime or after their death. Morris explains this by resorting to the concept of "a strong sense of family"³⁴. That is, Boaz's actions performed in favor of Ruth and Naomi can also be interpreted as *ḥesed* for the dead members of the family. According to Glueck, Naomi's blessing has been triggered by Boaz's honoring his deceased kinsmen and fulfilling his obligations by his special kindness to Ruth³⁵. However, *ḥesed* for Ruth and Naomi in itself can hardly be identified with *ḥesed* for the dead. Rather, by mentioning "the dead", Naomi anticipates the future development of the narrative. The term *ḥesed* looks forward to the events that will lead to the marriage of Ruth and Boaz³⁶. Joüon expresses Naomi's anticipation when he writes, "Il s'agit donc de Jéhovah qui, par Booz il est vrai, montre sa bonté envers Noémi et Ruth en subvenant à leurs besoins; sa bonté envers les morts, car Booz étant un goël, Noémi espère et prévoit qu'il épousera Ruth et suscitera ainsi une postérité à son mari défunt"³⁷.

It is also to be noted that there is no other place in the Hebrew Bible where "the *ḥesed* of God is mentioned in reference to the dead"³⁸. YHWH exercising (or abandoning) his *ḥesed* for the dead is a concept alien to the ancient Israelite religion, according to which the realm of death was the level of the world "from which YHWH was absent and from where he could usually not be addressed"³⁹. Since YHWH ruled only the realm of the living, the dead could not have any relationship with YHWH. According

³³ CAMPBELL, *Ruth*, 106.

³⁴ L. MORRIS, *Ruth*. An Introduction and Commentary (TOTC; Leicester – Downers Grove, IL 1968) 280.

³⁵ GLUECK, *Hesed*, 42.

³⁶ HUBBARD, *Ruth*, 187.

³⁷ JOÜON, *Ruth*, 63-64.

³⁸ GLUECK, *Hesed*, 41.

³⁹ Z. ZEVIT, *The Religion of Ancient Israel*. A Synthesis of Parallactic Approaches (London – New York 2001) 664. On the contrary, Cohen suggests that Ruth 2,20 could function as the sole evidence for such a concept, adducing the rabbinic tradition according to which "God buried the dead" (*b. Sotah* 14a). See COHEN, "*Ḥesed*", 20, 29. However, such an interpretation goes far beyond what the text means.

to G.R. Clark, the expression “*hesed* for the dead” might refer to YHWH’s acts through Ruth toward the dead men while they were alive⁴⁰. However, since Naomi’s saying is embedded in the context of her expectation of future development, “*hesed* for the dead” can better be associated with the anticipated actions of Boaz in his role as a redeemer.

The above analysis supports the possibility that Boaz is the agent of *hesed*. Boaz’s redeeming actions are regarded as *hesed* to the dead in that they perpetuate their name. In some respects, Naomi’s blessing may be seen as a hasty and premature utterance based on her inkling of how Boaz would act for her family. In other respects, it reveals Naomi’s joy, hopefulness, and confidence.

IV. The Book of Ruth and Naomi’s blessing

The dialogue between Ruth and Naomi (2,19-22) occurs in the episode located between those in which Boaz plays prominent roles. In the preceding episode, Boaz appears as a benevolent landowner who protects and cares for the alien widowed woman. In the following episodes, as a responsible redeemer he accepts her request and marries her after taking appropriate legal measures. The dialogue, placed at the juncture of these episodes, also centers around Boaz. He is the beneficiary of Naomi’s second blessing in Ru 2,20, and thus its object⁴¹. In the blessing, the relative clause elucidates the reason she blesses the beneficiary. In other places of the Hebrew Bible, a blessing is often followed by the grounds for which it is pronounced. In Ru 4,14 the women bless YHWH for not withholding a redeemer for Naomi. In Gen 24,27 Abraham’s servant blesses YHWH for not abandoning his faithfulness and truth from his master. In 2 Sam 2,5 David blesses the men of Jabesh-gilead for showing their faithfulness to Saul by burying him. In 1 Sam 23,21 Saul blesses the Ziphites for having “compassion” toward him by supplying information regarding David’s whereabouts⁴². Moreover, Naomi’s blessing of Boaz is followed by her informatory statement about Boaz, not YHWH: “the man is one of our redeemers” (2,20).

⁴⁰ CLARK, *The Word Hesed*, 200-201.

⁴¹ Holmstedt further notes that “Boaz is the topic of the blessing and there is no explicit switch of Topic”. See HOLMSTEDT, *Ruth*, 141.

⁴² Unlike Gen 24,27, Ru 4,14, and 2 Sam 2,5, where אֲשֶׁר clauses provide the reason for the blessing that precedes, in 1 Sam 23,21 the conjunction כִּי introduces the reason-clause. Furthermore, in Ru 3,10 the reason-clause follows the blessing asyndetically, that is, without a relative pronoun or a conjunction.

If the relative clause were taken as a statement regarding YHWH, it would be difficult to relate it with the blessing in the main clause. Why would the author have Naomi praise YHWH's previous acts at this point? The praise of YHWH for his faithfulness at this point would take the readers by surprise. The oddity becomes more conspicuous if we consider YHWH's role in this story. Though we may acknowledge the presence of "a continuous divine activity" throughout the story⁴³, YHWH never intrudes on human affairs or takes a leading role in them. Even Ruth's first encounter with Boaz is not described as YHWH's direct intervention but a mere chance (2,3). In addition, neither the narrator nor the participants readily praise YHWH except in the final stage of the story (4,14).

The blessing in Ru 2,20 functions as a watershed between Naomi embittered and Naomi restored. It marks the transition from her agony over her current situation to her anticipation of restoration. The most important factor that triggered the transition is Ruth's revelation of the name of the person who performed the acts of *ḥesed* to her. Naomi already had previous knowledge that the same person had a potential to dramatically change their lives. In such a context, a word about Boaz's action, rather than YHWH's, can be expected from Naomi's mouth. Therefore, the subject of the relative clause (= the agent of *ḥesed*) can better be identified with Boaz.

There are two other cases in which the word *ḥesed* is used in the Book of Ruth. Earlier in the book (1,8) it is Orpah and Ruth who performed *ḥesed* to both the living (Naomi) and the dead (their husbands and Elimelech).

יעשה יהוה עמכם חסד כאשר עשיתם עם־המתים ועמדי
May YHWH show faithfulness to you just as
you did to the dead and me. (1,8)

Significantly, the phrase "the living and the dead" also appears in Naomi's blessing of Boaz (2,20). Later in the narrative (3,10), Boaz praises Ruth for her acts of *ḥesed*.

ברוכה את ליהוה בתי הישבת חסדך האחרון מן־הראשון [...]
May you be blessed by YHWH, my daughter.
You have shown your last faithfulness
to be better than the first [...] (3,10)

Just as Boaz's blessing of Ruth is followed by the grounds for it in Ru 3,10, the relative clause in Ru 2,20 can best be interpreted as the grounds for which Naomi blesses Boaz. Moreover, the other two occurrences (1,8;

⁴³ THOMPSON, "New Life", 203.

3,10), according to Meinhold, show “die [...] festgestellte, ursprünglich profane Verwendung von *hesed*”⁴⁴. The latter occurrence (3,10) belongs to the secular domain since it is about Ruth. The former (1,8) mentions YHWH’s *hesed*, but it is only a wish while the actual *hesed* has been done by Orpah and Ruth⁴⁵. One might propose that, unlike the other cases, divine *hesed* is meant in 2,20. Yet Naomi has better reason to praise Boaz for his kindness toward her family at this moment of the story. As Freedman notes, Naomi is characterized as having “a uniformly negative opinion of God”⁴⁶. Her bitterness (1,20-21) would finally be resolved with Ruth’s marriage to Boaz and the subsequent birth of a child at the end. In addition, it is not Naomi’s relationship with YHWH that is in focus. As K.M. Saxegaard rightly states, “the three occurrences of *hesed* are mainly connected to human characters”⁴⁷. In the Book of Ruth, direct divine intervention or communication between God and human beings is generally avoided (e.g. 2,3). Rather, the story focuses, at least on the surface, on the faithfulness of the protagonists, especially Ruth and Boaz, toward one another. Therefore, the identification of the agent of *hesed* in Ru 2,20 with Boaz is congruent with the theme of human *hesed* conspicuous in the Book of Ruth⁴⁸.

V. Conclusion

Our investigation not only points to the more probable option between the two possibilities but also elucidates the role of Naomi’s blessing in the context of the whole narrative. One may argue that the ambiguity resides in the narrator’s intention⁴⁹. However, the ambiguity in question originates from syntactic structures and must not be in the author’s mind. A careful ancient reader probably understood the intended meaning while possibly enjoying the ambiguity for literary and theological purposes. Though YHWH may be implicit in the background, it is Boaz who did not

⁴⁴ A. MEINHOLD, “Theologische Schwerpunkte im Buch Ruth und ihr Gewicht für seine Datierung”, *TZ* 32 (1976) 133 n. 46.

⁴⁵ Clark describes Ruth and Orpah’s *hesed* as “functional” and YHWH’s as “ostensive”. See CLARK, *The Word Hesed*, 167-168.

⁴⁶ A.D. FREEDMAN, *God as an Absent Character in Biblical Hebrew Narrative. A Literary-Theoretical Study* (Studies in Biblical Literature 82; New York – Washington, DC 2005) 210.

⁴⁷ SAXEGAARD, *Character Complexity*, 187.

⁴⁸ According to Zobel, of the 245 attestations of *hesed* in the Hebrew Bible only about 63 belong to the secular domain. See H.-J. ZOBEL, “הֶסֶד *hesed*”, *TDOT* 5 (1986) 44-64, here 45.

⁴⁹ COLLINS, “Ambiguity”, 100 n. 14.

abandon his *ḥesed* with the living and the dead. In its search for the agent of *ḥesed* in Naomi's blessing, this article also brings out the importance of human activity in the Book of Ruth.

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SUMMARY

The ambiguity regarding the agent of *ḥesed* in Naomi's blessing in Ru 2,20 has been the focus of interest for commentators, linguists, and translators. For a better resolution of the ambiguity, this article examines the syntactic structure of the sentence, seeks a proper understanding of the significance of "*ḥesed* to the dead", and sets the blessing in the context of the whole narrative. The findings of our analysis support the argument that it is Boaz who, in Naomi's words, performed *ḥesed* to the living and dead members of her family.

RECENSIONES

Vetus Testamentum

Ellen A. ROBBINS, *The Storyteller and the Garden of Eden*. Eugene, Pickwick Publications, 2012. xiv-180 p. 15,5 × 23

Ellen A. Robbins' *The Storyteller and the Garden of Eden* is a welcome addition to the literary criticism of the Garden of Eden narrative. This well-written work is both an engaging and insightful analysis of the language, style, and contents of the Eden narrative. For the benefit of a wider audience, much of Robbins' technical engagement with previous scholarship on the Garden of Eden appears in footnotes.

In the first chapter, "Zeno in the Garden of Eden", Robbins presents Zeno's paradox as a metaphor for her goal in the book of getting ever closer to a cogent interpretation of the Eden story. She outlines her pursuit of the "author" of the story of Eden, whom she refers to as the Storyteller throughout. In this first chapter, Robbins identifies the main components of the story and argues that the text of Genesis 2–3 should be read as an integrated unit, arguing against the scholarly consensus of two independent sources in the narrative. The literary unity of the text is a conceit that undergirds her discussion of the one author of the story; however it is a conceit that does not always hold true (either for Robbins' own discussion, or in a close analysis of elements of the Eden narrative I will discuss below).

The second chapter introduces the reader to the characters and content of the Eden narrative. In this chapter, Robbins emphasizes the complexity and richness of the Hebrew language, which allows the reader to identify the linguistic motivations of the author's use of puns and word plays as markers of interrelationship. Perhaps one of the more interesting suggestions in this chapter is Robbins' explanation of the combined name YHWH-Elohim throughout the Eden narrative. Assuming the combined name is an intentional product of a unified narrative (rather than a remnant of the redaction of independent sources), Robbins suggests the name should be translated as "YHWH, a God" as distinct from the human and animal characters the deity interacts with in the text. Therefore, this narrative device emphasizes one of the central elements of the larger Eden narrative: the boundary between divine and human realms. In this chapter, Robbins also questions the prevailing interpretation of the Eden narrative as a Yahwist text. She argues the Eden narrative circulated as an originally independent narrative that is unlike the rest of the book of Genesis. While there are

some elements of the Eden narrative that are perhaps unique linguistically and stylistically, Robbins may fall somewhat short in establishing the distinct character of the author of the Eden narrative vis-à-vis the rest of the book of Genesis which also contains word plays, puns, etiological narratives, etc.

In the third chapter, Robbins presents an excellent discussion of the word plays embedded in the names of the characters in the Garden of Eden. In this analysis, Robbins gives the reader access to the intricacies of the Hebrew language, particularly regarding the use of homonyms, word plays, and euphony which function as building blocks for the Eden narrative. Here the reader is introduced to the intimacy of the relationships between the man and the earth, the man and the woman, and the linguistic forces undergirding and driving the story. While the vast majority of this chapter is methodologically sound, at least one element of Robbins' discussion relies too heavily on the presumption of narrative unity, straining both credulity and the limits of our access to authorial intention. In describing Gen 3,3 which proscribes eating from the one tree "in the midst of the garden", Robbins remarks that the awkward syntax and omission of the Tree of Life here is a "subtle reminder of the other tree" (45). While the majority of scholars argue that the Tree of Life in Gen 2,9 and 3,22 and 3,24 is an insertion into the story of the Garden of Eden (which is almost exclusively concerned with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil), Robbins asserts the absence of the Tree of Life in the story indicates its centrality. While this point is by no means central to the larger purpose of Robbins' work, it may undermine her goal of accessing the intentions of the author of the Eden narrative by pushing the conceit of narrative unity beyond its reasonable limits.

Whereas chapter three explores the interrelationships of the characters, chapter four attempts to categorize the punishments in Eden and their relationship to their crimes. Robbins appropriately argues that the punishments of Adam, Eve, and the serpent neither support assumptions about their proportionality, nor do they fundamentally concern an act of disobedience or "fall" in Eden. Rather, the central concern of the punishments is to reinvigorate the boundaries between divine and human realms. In defending this position, Robbins suggests that the punishment of each character serves to reduce them in their own realms "so that they end up subservient to the materials of their origin, the man to the soil, the woman to the man" (80). This inversion of creation in the punishments presents a compelling and innovative argument for the intention behind the text. Twice in this chapter Robbins argues that verses 2,24 and 3,20 intrude into an otherwise unified text. According to Robbins, they are "jarring to one tuned to the narrative voice and the subtlety of the Storyteller's art" (73). While I agree that the stylistic incongruities and awkwardness suggest these verses do not belong with the rest of the story, I wonder

whether the recognition of these foreign intrusions into the text might also apply in other cases where Robbins argues for narrative unity. In such cases, Robbins resolves narrative complexity with reference to the skillfulness of the Storyteller who played with the narrative to create deliberate tensions, or even subtle reference through omission. I am perplexed by this use of awkward stylistic breaks as evidence both of the skill of the Storyteller, and as an interruption of the Storyteller's voice.

Chapter five contains some of Robbins' most robust argumentation concerning mortality and the events in the Garden of Eden. According to Robbins, the Garden narrative as a whole presents an etiology of mortality where a Tree of Life is not available for the prolonging or preservation of life. In this etiology, the punishments draw boundaries between the realms of humanity and divinity, and serve to exacerbate mortality by making life more difficult. To use the author's terms, this narrative is an explanatory etiology rather than a causal etiology (in contrast to the Pauline interpretation of the loss of immortality as a consequence of disobedience). As Robbins articulates, there is no allusion to original or creational immortality in the Garden of Eden, but mortality is innate. According to Robbins, the Garden of Eden, as an explanatory etiology, culminates in punishments that describe the precarious existence of mankind. While this interpretation is sound, this chapter also contains a series of debatable discussions of the unity and disunity of the narrative. On the one hand, Robbins argues that Gen 3,20-21 (containing the naming of Eve as the mother of all living, and the clothing of Adam and Eve) contains two glosses that address the need for procreation and protection. On the other hand, Robbins argues that Gen 3,22-24 is integral to the narrative and its larger etiological function. While I would agree that there is a clear shift in tone and syntax between verse 19 and 20, there is also a shift in focus in verses 22 and 24. The Tree of Life in these verses is almost entirely absent from the rest of the narrative with the exception of the stylistically awkward verse in Gen 2,9. While the redacted Eden narrative does prioritize the Tree of Life in the framing of the larger etiology, it is difficult to read the Tree of Life as an integral element of a unified narrative that is relatively unconcerned with it. Robbins returns to this missing tree in chapter seven where she suggests that only God, the narrator, and the audience know about the Tree of Life. It is far more natural to argue that the Tree of Life was not part of the original story, rather than a central element that was deliberately hidden. Having said that, much of Robbins' argument in this chapter is to be praised as she deftly offers an alternative to the interpretation of the Garden of Eden as primarily concerned with sin, immortality, and disobedience.

In chapters six and seven, Robbins examines the characteristics and motivations of the snake, God, man, and woman. Here we are introduced to a snake that is a judicious truth-teller rather than Satan or an enemy of

humankind; to a man who fears God's reaction to his nakedness rather than his disobedience; to a God whose godlikeness is a central theme of the narrative; and to the man and woman whose intimacy of relationship is linguistically revealed.

In the final chapter Robbins introduces the reader to the principal character of her inquiry: the Storyteller. Much of this chapter reiterates earlier arguments about the Storyteller as an adept employer of irony, word plays, and puns who intimately understood his audience. In the climax of this chapter, Robbins conveys what appears to be the underlying purpose of her search for the Storyteller. She writes in the denouement that the Storyteller was a social critic in addition to being a literary master. She argues throughout this final chapter that the Storyteller delegitimizes the custom of male domination. While this is an important social critique, it may be an overestimation of the intent behind the etiology of male domination in the Eden narrative. If male domination is read as an explanatory etiology in the Eden story, the Storyteller may simply be reporting cultural realities, rather than critiquing predominant social roles or advocating proper equality in male-female relationships.

In the first chapter, Robbins suggests that her book will offer a "thoroughly revamped interpretation" of the Eden narrative that will "provide a clear indication of how the text itself asks to be read" (14). While this goal may not have been fully accomplished, Robbins' work does effectively highlight the vibrancy and life of the Eden narrative through her analysis of its tone, syntax, word plays, etc. In doing so, Robbins draws our attention to the voice of the text, whether or not this gives us a glimpse of its author.

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Peter Thatcher LANFER, *Remembering Eden. The Reception History of Genesis 3:22-24*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012. x-256 p. 16 × 24. £ 45.00

This study of the expulsion motif in the Eden narrative is a revised version of Peter Lanfer's dissertation presented to UCLA in 2010, under the supervision of Bill Schniedewind. The revision took place during Lanfer's time at Dartmouth College with Susan Ackerman, and at Yale with John Collins — both of whom strongly recommend the work on the back of the book's dust jacket. The reader, therefore, approaches the volume with expectations. Although the book has its qualities, this reader, at least, was somewhat disappointed.

The project is to sketch a theory, or perhaps rather a practice, of text and interpretation that would honour constructivist insights that texts do

not have fixed meanings, and still be able to identify a certain interpretive potential in a text. Lanfer aims at a dialogical approach (165), one that views a text as an interpretive repertoire actualised in its receptions, but which is nevertheless able to distinguish between exegetical and *eisegetical* receptions. The main factor to render certain readings implausible or even impossible is the “symbolic capital” of texts: “signs and motifs that undergird the production of any interpretive text.” (I return to this concept below.)

In addition to sketching that project, Chapter 1 identifies the Tree of Life and the expulsion scene (Gen 2,9; 3,22-24) as one redactional addition. It claims that the composition of the expulsion narrative and its history of reception have been neglected in scholarship. Under ‘sources’, Lanfer argues for including non-canonical texts, iconography, and tradition, and establishing “necessary and genetic relationships” between items to be considered (18). An impressive range of sources is listed: MT, LXX, DSS, Pseudepigrapha, NT, rabbinic literature, patristic literature, and ‘gnostic texts’. Chapter 2, “The Tree of Life”, notes that references to the Tree of Life are very numerous in the LXX, and there is a preoccupation with Eden, Adam, and wisdom in the Targums and the Peshitta. The chapter reviews a great number of references to the Tree of Life in apocalyptic literature, ‘Second Temple’ narratives, testament literature, etc. It pays short visits to Christian recasts of originally Jewish literature, and to “writings that reflect gnostic ideologies”.

Chapter 3 concerns “Wisdom and the Expulsion from the Garden”. The first section quotes a selection of scholarship to argue that the “creation” narrative is at home in the biblical wisdom tradition, while the later “complete” narrative has a covenantal perspective. (The characterisations “covenantal” and “covenantal, temple-centred” occur without clarification.) A number of sapiential and apocalyptic passages see the wisdom in Eden as positive. According to Lanfer, this “stands in stark contrast to the appropriate boundaries of wisdom in Genesis 2–3”. The chapter considers texts connecting the “fall of man” (sic) to royal wisdom, or focusing on the motif “to become like God(s)”, etc. One section reflects how the “redacted story” delivers a polemic against the sapiential road / way motif.

Chapter 4 turns to the “Access to Eden and the Hope for Immortality”, considering texts that see ‘Eden as Immortal Place’ (sic) as divine court, as an abode for the righteous deceased, as guarded (by angles, cherubim), and as re-opened (for Messiah, the martyrs, in the eschaton, and in common resurrection). The final Chapter 5 thematises “Eden and the Temple” in a large number of parameters. Throughout these and earlier chapters the selection of receptive texts is impressively wide, covering indeed the full range of sources listed in the introductory chapter.

Reading the “Conclusions” for chapters 2 through 5 one gets a summary of Lanfer’s sense of direction and constraints in the textuality of the Eden narrative. Since it held culturally fundamental motives, such as the

sacred tree, the narrative itself became a central cultural space. It was engaged for instance in later eschatological expectations. Another recurring motif was the “hubris of man’s pursuit of divine wisdom resulting in the loss of immortality” – a point where “sapiential” and “covenantal” receptions of the story clash. The story contains a polemic against the acquisition of wisdom. The idea of a re-entry to Eden provided a space that was variously exploited in different receptions. The Garden of Eden was consistently associated with the (earthly, heavenly, or metaphoric) temple.

The idea of accessing the significance of biblical passages through the lens of early Jewish interpreters is perhaps not as novel as Lanfer implies. Still his view of a text as an interpretive repertoire actualised in its receptions (my rephrasing) strikes me as interesting. Unfortunately, both the theoretical and practical unfolding of this view leaves a number of problems.

A point of theory hinges on the concept “cultural capital”. The phrase was coined by the French sociologist and cultural analyst Pierre Bourdieu, but Lanfer uses the concept completely differently. To Lanfer, cultural capital is “the cumulative imagery in the literary and cultural world of authors and editors” (171, n. 37). Texts, therefore, “have” cultural capital (97) in the form of “base motives”, “foundational concepts”, and “universal metaphors” (64). The “cultural field” of a text is made up of the signs and motives that undergird the production of text and its receptions alike. This is what “places constraints on the interpretation of a text appropriate to the discourse and symbols the text contains” (165).

Evidently, this perception of culture resembles that of Clifford Geertz, who saw cultures as fairly coherent symbolic systems. Bourdieu’s more dynamic cultural theory could be seen as a critique of the Geertz paradigm. And indeed, Lanfer’s interpretation conceals the social dynamics that Bourdieu targeted with his concept “cultural capital” — such as the emergence of cultural products (texts) through social discourse, the social valuation of these products, the transforming of cultural capital into social or monetary capital, or the use of cultural capital to dominate groups down through the hierarchy of social discourse. Current cultural theory would not sustain the cultural-symbolical consistency and reciprocity that Lanfer’s paradigm presupposes. Readers are now generally thought to have had more latitude and agency than Lanfer seems to allow for, and this potentially endangers his entire enterprise. The project needs further theoretical and conceptual foundation.

Also Lanfer’s interpretive practice is less than convincing. Briefly put, the reading of Genesis 2–3 is in part simplistic, perhaps because it lacks attention to important earlier scholarship. Also his readings of many early Jewish receptions are too shallow.

To take the latter first, Lanfer tacitly presumes that all instances of reception are adequately read in context of the discourse he finds in Genesis 2–3. Perhaps some of them are, but others obviously had different hori-

zons. One example is the claim that the idea of revivification from dust derives from Genesis 2–3, perhaps mediated by images of mortality in Job (125). As for instance Pettinato, Stol, or Schrör and Staubli have made overly clear: the view that humankind is made of dust was common in the ancient Near East, echoing in speech patterns and habitual acts pertaining to birth, death, and revivification. At this point, and many more, Lanfer falls short of his own criterion to identify “necessary and genetic” relationships in the material.

Let me turn to Lanfer’s reading of Genesis 2–3 and its scholarship. It is baffling how a narrow selection of modern interpretations becomes non-disputable facts in this book. Lanfer takes it for granted that Genesis 2–3 was “composed of an older narrative containing only the Tree of Knowledge and ending with the punishments and cursing of the protagonists; and a later editorial frame including the Tree of Life [...] and the expulsion from Eden” (159). This insertion was a polemic against the configuration of wisdom and immortality for instance in *Gilgamesh* (41). The scholarly argument on the two trees in Eden has been raging for a century and a third. Lanfer only renders the opening argument of K. Budde (1883) through a citation of H. Gunkel — avoiding mentioning that Gunkel already in 1901 argued to move beyond this reconstruction towards an original, narratively consistent myth with two trees. Intense objections to Budde by Obbink (1928) and a number of more recent followers are left unconsidered. Instead, the presumed polemics of the “redacted story” becomes so deeply affirmed that when a number of proponents in the reception history of Genesis 2–3 did not recognise or honour this polemic — such as “sapiential” interpretations — Lanfer assumes they attempt to ‘reverse’ the story (70–76). Under Lanfer’s direction these readers end up testifying that the story had a very different significance than the one they had positively read there.

An eclectic attitude to earlier scholarship is not entirely atypical in the book. Lanfer sometimes profiles earlier research (or a perceived lack thereof) so as to promote his own project. In his review of earlier research he says scholarship on the reception of Genesis 3,22–24 beyond the biblical canon is lacking. The bibliography of the *École biblique* shows this is wrong — and later on Lanfer himself actually cites works on the reception history of Genesis 2–3 and 3,22–24 beyond the biblical canon. Among these are entries in *Genesis 1–3 in the History of Exegesis*. Intrigue in the Garden (ed. G.A. Robbins) (Studies in women & religion 27; Lewiston 1988), and the obvious choice: J. Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*. The Read-Tuckwell Lectures for 1990 (London 1992). Lanfer also claims that the ‘polemical function of the expulsion narrative has been neglected (41, n. 45). Is he unaware of for instance N. Wyatt, “The Hollow Crown: Ambivalent Elements in West Semitic Royal Ideology”, *Ugarit-Forschungen* 18 (1986) 421–436; J.W. Rosenberg, *King*

and Kin. Political Allegory in the Hebrew Bible (Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature; Bloomington, IN 1986), or D.E. Gowan, *When Man Becomes God*. Humanism and Hybris in the Old Testament (Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series 6; Pittsburgh, PA 1975)?

Lanfer similarly claims that “literary approaches to [Genesis 2–3] often leave aside the original text or its composition, preferring to search for meaning in the way the text is structured” (165). Did he not recognise that in works by scholars like Culley, Jobling, Naidoff, Rosenberg, van Wolde, and many more whom he cites, the argument is that the structuring of the text does not encourage the kind of layered reading that Lanfer (with Carr) proposes?

In sum, I sympathise with Lanfer’s view of textual significance as something that emerges over time, visible for historical scholarship when texts become sites for subsequent receptions. Lanfer’s claim that the textuality of the text helps fashion that interpretive space makes sense, but it is in need of further reflection. In this book, however, the paradox is that Lanfer does not actually go very deeply into the textuality of the Eden narrative, and certainly not the textuality of its receptions. As such, the book remains a torso of a potentially very interesting project.

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Terje STORDALEN

Shimon GESUNDHEIT, *Three Times a Year*. Studies on Festival Legislation in the Pentateuch (FAT 82). Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2012. xiii-277 p. 16 × 23,5

Il volume di Gesundheit si inserisce in un filone di ricerca di grande interesse in quanto lo studio delle feste e i relativi calendari permette di risalire alle fasi pre-letterarie delle norme che regolavano le celebrazioni religiose di Israele. Del resto, J. Wellhausen (*Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* [Berlin 2001] 94-102) considerò le feste come la testimonianza più arcaica della storia di Israele. Proprio per tale motivo, lo studio dei calendari è stato un settore in cui le ricerche sono state abbondanti, come dimostra la recente panoramica sull’argomento fornita da B. Kilchör, “Passah und Mazzot – Ein Überblick über die Forschung seit dem 19. Jahrhundert”, *Bib* 94 (2013) 340-367. Nell’abbondante bibliografia segnalata da Kilchör merita particolare attenzione l’opera di J.A. Wagenaar (*Origin and Transformation of the Ancient Israelite Festival Calendar* [BZABR 6; Wiesbaden 2005]) non solo perché, per quanto è a mia conoscenza, è l’opera più affine a quella del nostro autore — entrambe, infatti, cercano di fornire un quadro diacronico delle feste in base all’evoluzione dei passi biblici che le regolano — ma anche perché le due ricerche presen-

tano vistose divergenze e, di conseguenza, appare evidente che, nonostante l'impegno e la serietà professionale degli autori, siamo ben lontani dall'aver messo la parola fine alla travagliata ricerca in tale settore.

L'opera di *Gesundheit* è strutturata in cinque capitoli. Il primo (12-43) è dedicato al confronto sinottico tra Es 23,14-19 e Es 34,18-26 e porta alle seguenti conclusioni (36-43; 223-225): il testo più antico sarebbe quello di Es 23,14-19 che regolava, essenzialmente, la festa degli azzimi; Es 34,18-26, che sarebbe uno sviluppo midrashico di Es 23, sviluppa la medesima legislazione e vi inserisce: a) le norme relative all'offerta dei primogeniti (vv. 19-20); b) le norme sul riposo settimanale (v. 21). La prima inserzione sarebbe ottenuta prendendo il testo di Es 13,13 e trasferendolo a Es 34,20 al fine di prescrivere l'offerta dei primogeniti nella festa degli azzimi (20-21). Il riposo settimanale (Es 34,21), invece, riprende la prescrizione di Es 23,12 apportandovi sostanziali modifiche sia lessicali che di contenuto (14; 21-22).

Il capitolo secondo (44-95) è dedicato all'analisi di Es 12,1-28, che l'autore ritiene appartenente nella sua totalità alla scuola sacerdotale (61-64). Esso tuttavia sarebbe composto di due strati; il primo (vv. 1-11), che conterrebbe il materiale più antico, avrebbe subito una successiva interpretazione nei vv. 22-27. Nel primo strato ci sarebbe il tentativo di trasferire un antico rito, da celebrarsi nel decimo giorno del mese, al quattordicesimo del mese (91) e quindi di spostare la celebrazione della Pasqua al giorno prima degli azzimi. Un altro risultato ottenuto da chi ha composto i vv. 1-11 è di aver trasformato un originario rito apotropaico (che utilizzava il sangue come elemento di protezione) in un rito domestico da celebrarsi nelle singole case e non più nel tempio (93-94).

Il capitolo terzo (96-166) affronta l'analisi di Dt 16, normalmente considerato un calendario, anche se per il nostro autore esso sarebbe semplicemente una disposizione finalizzata a imporre la centralizzazione della Pasqua (144). Il confronto tra il testo di Dt 16,1-8 ed Es 12; 13; 23; 34 porta l'autore a trarre alcune conclusioni: Dt 16,1-8 presenta certamente affinità lessicali con alcuni brani di Esodo menzionati in precedenza, ma i vv. 2.5-7 non presentano alcun elemento comune con Esodo (132-133). Questi ultimi, invece, presentano affinità con Dt 12 che tratta della centralizzazione del culto (101; 140). Di conseguenza, tali versetti costituiscono il nucleo originario della legislazione pasquale che già esisteva prima della sua inserzione in Dt 16 (133). L'autore dei versetti sopra menzionati avrebbe soltanto formulato una norma che vietava la celebrazione del rito fuori di Gerusalemme. Per contro, i vv. 1.3-4, che dipendono da brani di Esodo, dimostrano che Dt 16 è posteriore a Es 23 e 34. Per l'autore è possibile che Es 34 abbia influenzato la stesura di Dt 16 (147).

Il quarto capitolo (167-222) è invece dedicato all'analisi di Es 13,1-16, che tratta degli azzimi e dell'offerta dei primogeniti. Dall'analisi letteraria risulta che il testo è omogeneo ma è influenzato da altri testi. In particolare

Es 13,12-13 sembra essere una rielaborazione di Es 34,19-20 (183). Di conseguenza, dobbiamo ipotizzare che Es 13 sia posteriore a Es 34.

Nel capitolo quinto (223-234) l'autore riassume i risultati della ricerca. Alla fine dell'opera, una bibliografia (235-251) e gli indici analitici completano l'opera.

Senza dubbio il lavoro di Gesundheit si impone per l'analisi accurata dei testi; in particolare, egli, attraverso la sinossi, cerca di ricostruire la loro evoluzione diacronica. Alcune di tali ricostruzioni sono convincenti, altre suscitano qualche perplessità. L'autore è senza dubbio nel giusto quando, attraverso un confronto sinottico di Es 23,14-19 e Es 34,18-26, conclude che sia quest'ultimo a dipendere dal primo. Anche l'analisi di Es 12,1-28, che rappresenta uno dei testi principali della Pasqua, risulta abbastanza condivisibile: la posizione tradizionale che considerava Es 12,21-27 anteriore a 12,1-11 è ormai definitivamente superata. In favore della tesi del nostro autore si potrebbe evidenziare il ruolo del *mašhîṭ* che in Es 12,23 esegue per conto di JHWH lo sterminio dei primogeniti, mentre in Es 12,13 è JHWH personalmente che compie l'azione. In Giubilei 49,1-2, strettamente dipendente dal testo di Esodo, lo sterminio è attribuito a Mastema, una figura demoniaca imparentata con *śāṭān*; questo dimostra che nella tradizione giudaica, contrariamente a quanto sostenuto da Gesundheit (68-69), permane la tendenza a delegare a simili personaggi i compiti disdicevoli in precedenza attribuiti a JHWH (cfr 2Sam 24,1//1Cr 21,1).

A mio avviso, tuttavia, il punto più debole dell'opera di Gesundheit è rappresentato dall'analisi di Dt 16,1-8. Contrariamente all'opinione del nostro autore, la dipendenza di Dt 16,7 da Es 12,9 risulta palese dal confronto dei due versetti:

Es 12,9: "Non lo mangerete crudo, né bollito nell'acqua (*bāšēl mebuššāl*), ma solo arrostito al fuoco (*šeli- 'ēš*) con la testa, le zampe e le viscere".

Dt 16,7: "La farai cuocere (*biššaltā*, letteralmente "la farai bollire") e la mangerai nel luogo che il Signore, tuo Dio, avrà scelto. La mattina potrai andartene e tornare alle tue tende".

Qualunque sfumatura si voglia attribuire al verbo *bāšal*, certamente Es 12,9 proibisce che la carne sia cotta nel modo prescritto in Dt 16,7, ossia bollita. È logico quindi pensare che Es 12 sia posteriore a Dt 16; su questo punto la posizione dell'autore mi sembra abbastanza confusa (144-145).

Sempre per quanto concerne l'analisi di Dt 16,18, a mio avviso, Gesundheit avrebbe dovuto tener conto dell'articolo di V. Wagner ("Das Pesach ist 'zwischen eingekommen' (Dtn 16,1-8)", *Bib* 91 [2010] 481-498), nel quale l'autore sostiene che la parte più antica di Dt 16,1-8 sia quella relativa agli azzimi, a cui, in un secondo tempo, sarebbe stata aggiunta la normativa sulla Pasqua. Secondo Wagner ci sarebbero tre argomenti in favore della sua tesi:

L'indicazione del mese di *'ābīb*, resa da Wagner con "Zeit der weichreifen Ähren", usata in Dt 16,1 per indicare la data della Pasqua, non può essere

un'indicazione temporale adeguata per una festa (la quale ha necessità di un giorno preciso per poter essere celebrata). Mentre per gli azzimi che durano sette giorni è un'indicazione più comprensibile.

Soltanto in Dt 16,1 l'indicazione *'ābib* è messa in rapporto con la Pasqua e gli azzimi, mentre in Es 23,15 ed Es 34,18 il termine è in relazione soltanto con gli azzimi.

In Dt 16,16, considerato un riepilogo del calendario, si menzionano le tre feste di pellegrinaggio (azzimi, settimane e capanne), ma non si menziona la Pasqua, segno che essa non faceva (ancora) parte delle feste di pellegrinaggio.

Infine un ultimo rilievo: la testimonianza della Pasqua e degli Azzimi nei papiri di Elefantina avrebbe forse meritato maggiore attenzione da parte di Gesundheit, il quale, invece, si accontenta di dedicare all'argomento una semplice nota (146). Si tratta invece di una testimonianza importante in quanto il famoso papiro pasquale in realtà tratta esclusivamente degli Azzimi. Il termine *psh* è stato inserito dall'editore, ma non compare nel testo (B. Porten, *Archives from Elephantine. The Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony* [Berkeley 1968] 311). Si potrebbe avere un punto di riferimento sicuro per asserire che nel 400 a.C. le due feste non erano unite.

I rilievi critici fin qui espressi non intendono in alcun modo sminuire la validità di fondo dell'opera di Gesundheit, che rappresenta un contributo scientifico di grande importanza per chiarire l'evoluzione del calendario delle feste bibliche.

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Bálint Károly ZABÁN, *The Pillar Function of the Speeches of Wisdom.*

Proverbs 1:20-33, 8:1-36 and 9:1-6 in the Structural Framework of Proverbs 1-9 (BZAW 429). Berlin – Boston, de Gruyter, 2012. xxiv-377 p. 16 × 23,5. €119,95.

Cette dissertation a été présentée à l'*Union Theological College* de Belfast, en Irlande du Nord, et le Prof. James Williamson en a assuré la direction. Le sujet préoccupe les exégètes: Pr 1-9 forme-t-il une unité? Les avis sont partagés et Z. se propose de répondre par l'affirmative. C'était aussi le propos, mais par d'autres voies, de Martino Signorello dans sa dissertation présentée à l'Université Grégorienne et publiée sous le titre de *Metafora e didattica in Proverbi 1-9* (Assisi 2006), étude que Z., pourtant bien au courant de la littérature exégétique sur le sujet, n'a pas consultée. La méthode utilisée par Z. est double. Tout d'abord l'analyse de la structure littéraire des trois discours de la Sagesse, servant de base à une *close reading* de ces discours: Pr 1,20-33 (54-64); 8,1-36 (130-180) et 9,1-6 (181-204).

Le point de départ de cette recherche vient de deux articles de P.W. Skehan, "The Seven Columns of Wisdom's House in Proverbs 1-9" et "Wisdom's House", dans ses *Studies in Israelite Poetry and Wisdom* (CBQM 1; Washington DC 1971) 9-14 et 27-45 (cf. 39-45), ainsi que de deux articles de J.-N. Aletti, "Proverbes 8,22-31. Étude de structure", *Bib* 57 (1976) 25-37, et "Séduction et parole en Proverbes I-IX", *VT* 27 (1977) 129-144 (cf. 159-171, 253-256). Du premier de ces auteurs, Z. retient que le thème de la maison unifie Pr 1-9, quitte à lui en ajouter deux, l'un, repris à Aletti, étant celui du chemin et l'autre, celui des trésors qui emplissent la maison. Du second auteur, Z. retient aussi l'idée de séduction, à laquelle il ajoute celles de la tentation et du caractère désirable de tel objet (surtout 291-336). Outre ces deux exégètes, Z. recourt à une quantité d'auteurs qui se sont intéressés à Pr 1-9, en particulier à R.C. Van Leeuwen (19-35) et S. Weeks; en français, il ressuscite *Les Scribes inspirés* d'H. Duesberg, ouvrage savoureux et compétent paru en 1938. Les notes très développées, ainsi que les discussions point par point montrent que Z. a ouvert tous les dossiers et justifie ses choix en connaissance de cause.

Un premier chapitre (8-18) présente un état de la recherche sur la structure de Pr 1-9 et sur le rapport entre les instructions parentales et les discours de la Sagesse. Le deuxième (19-51) fait de même à partir du thème de la maison; ici Z. s'appuie sur l'article de Van Leeuwen, "Cosmos, Temple, House: Building and Wisdom in Mesopotamia and Israel", *Wisdom Literature in Mesopotamia and Israel* (éd. R.J. Clifford) (SBLSS 36; Atlanta 2007) 67-90. Suivent trois longs chapitres: sur Pr 1,20-33 (52-118), sur Pr 8,1-36 (119-180) et sur Pr 9,1-6 (181-204), une *close reading*, fondée, comme on l'a dit *supra*, sur la structure littéraire de chacun de ces poèmes. Le sixième chapitre (205-285) cherche à définir le genre littéraire de ces trois discours de la Sagesse: un *wisdom sermon*, dans le cadre d'instructions sapientielles et de discours prophétiques réprobateurs et menaçants, ceux-ci élevant les instructions au niveau supérieur, aussi bien littérairement que théologiquement (229). Quoi qu'il en soit de ce résultat, Z. développe alors, dans un septième chapitre (230-285), la dimension thématique qui, à son avis, unifie l'ensemble de Pr 1-9. En effet, s'il rassemble, sans s'y attarder, les métaphores, comparaisons, images, etc., présentes en Pr 1-9 (236-253), c'est pour s'attacher au thème qui lui paraît justifier l'unité de Pr 1-9: le chemin, la maison et ses trésors (253-285). Le dernier chapitre (286-343) complète l'étude précédente par celle de l'autre thème unificateur de Pr 1-9, la séduction, la tentation et le caractère désirable de tel objet.

On voit donc que l'unité de Pr 1-9 est fondamentalement thématique. Z. le montre dans ses deux derniers chapitres où les thèmes retenus sont communs aux discours de la Sagesse et aux instructions parentales. La conclusion de tout cet effort de recherche convaincra-t-elle? Je le pense, même si, sur plusieurs points, la discussion se poursuivra. En voici déjà quelques éléments, relevés à la lecture de ce travail.

Il y a tout d'abord chez Z. un jugement trop négatif sur la méthode historico-critique. Refuser de voir qu'en Pr 1,20-33, il y a des additions ne me paraît pas sage. Certes, on peut tenter de ne prendre que le texte dans son état final, mais un maître comme L. Alonso Schökel, *Manual de poética hebrea* (Madrid 1987) 217-218 et 228, affirmait que, pour percevoir l'unité originale d'un poème, il faut parfois en retrancher les ajouts et insertions; il disait aussi qu'un schéma de structure littéraire doit être simple et ne pas prêter à confusion. Les analyses de Z. ne tiennent pas compte de ces deux conseils: même s'il reconnaît que d'autres structures littéraires sont possibles (63, n. 21), celles qu'il propose pour les trois discours de la Sagesse (55, 131-133 et 184) sont d'une telle complexité que le lecteur se découragera. D'autre part, refuser de voir, par exemple, en Pr 1,22bc un proverbe ajouté (74) conduit Z. à des explications trop subtiles et, de toute façon, Clifford n'est pas le seul à considérer ces deux stiques forment un vrai proverbe ajouté: ainsi faisaient la *BHK* et la *BHS*, ainsi que R.E. Murphy, *Proverbs* (WBC 22; Nashville 1998) 8, sans compter sur le déplacement de ce proverbe dans la *NEB* et la *NAB*. De même pour Pr 1,27c: refuser qu'il y a là une autre addition, pourtant admise par beaucoup, et s'appuyer sur D. Barthélemy e.a. (éds), *Preliminary and Interim Report on the Hebrew Old Testament Text Project*, III (Stuttgart 1977) 447, c'est une confusion de méthode, car ce *Report* ne vise que la critique textuelle, alors qu'il s'agit, pour reconnaître une glose, de critique littéraire appliquée à un poème.

Voici encore d'autres exemples. En Pr 8,22a, Z. traduit le verbe *qânâni* par *begot me* (125), ainsi que le font un grand nombre de commentateurs actuels, avec raison, me semble-t-il, mais alors pourquoi traduire le mot par *created me* (159), avec la LXX? En 8,30a, Z. lit *ummanu*, maître d'œuvre (27, 36 et 127): la proposition est ancienne, mais peu retenue aujourd'hui, car elle exclut la vocalisation du TM, sur laquelle M.V. Fox, "Amon Again", *JBL* 115 (1996) 699-702, a donné la meilleure explication actuelle. En Pr 9,1b, le sens des sept piliers intrigue depuis longtemps; Z. énumère les nombreuses explications proposées jusqu'à présent (325-326) et, selon lui (327), ces sept piliers seraient, comme le propose Van Leeuwen, ceux de la terre. Mais pourquoi sept? Cela, aucun des textes pris en références ne le dit. À moins, ajoute Z. que ce ne soit une allusion aux sept jours de Gn 1,1-2,3. Est-ce vraiment là le sens du texte? De toute façon, ne pas prendre en considération la proposition de B. Lang, fondée sur l'archéologie et mentionnée à la p. précédente, c'est aller un peu vite.

D'autre part, quel est le rapport entre Pr 9,1-6 et les collections proverbiales des chapitres suivants? Y a-t-il même un rapport? Z. signale plusieurs propositions avancées par de bons exégètes: celles de R. Tournay et de B.K. Waltke (41, n. 94) ou celle de L. Alonso Schökel (191), cependant, pour Z., Pr 1-9 formerait un ensemble avec Pr 10-24 (334, n. 277), mais pourquoi ne pas leur joindre Pr 25-31?

L'apport de l'étude de Z. à l'intelligence de Pr 1–9 est considérable. Même s'il fait peu de cas de la méthode historico-critique, ses analyses et ses discussions avec ses pairs sont éclairantes. Ses conclusions permettent de mieux saisir l'unité de composition de Pr 1–9.

L'ouvrage s'achève par une bibliographie, un index des citations, un index des noms et un autre énumérant les thèmes abordés. L'index des noms est incomplet: manquent au moins les noms d'H. Cazelles, d'A. Robert et de R. Tournay; de plus, au lieu de Schökel, L. Alonso, lire Alonso Schökel, L.

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Novum Testamentum

Martin BAUSPIESS, *Geschichte und Erkenntnis im lukanischen Doppelwerk*. Eine exegetische Untersuchung zu einer christlichen Perspektive auf Geschichte (Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte 42), Leipzig, Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2012. 607 p. 16 × 23,5. €68.

La position défendue par l'auteur, dans cette thèse de doctorat soutenue à Tübingen en 2011, est clairement énoncée: l'œuvre de Luc (évangile et Actes des apôtres) ne doit pas être assimilée à l'historiographie gréco-romaine suivant le paradigme massivement défendu dans la recherche lukanienne depuis Martin Dibelius et Hans Conzelmann. De même, il est inadéquat de qualifier Luc de théologien de l'histoire du salut ou de parler d'une "historicisation" du kérygme dans son œuvre. Luc problématise en effet le rapport entre histoire et reconnaissance (*Geschichte und Erkenntnis*) en ne faisant pas de l'historiographie le vecteur d'une exposition des vérités de la foi; au contraire, la compréhension théologique de l'histoire requiert le préalable de la foi, qui est un don divin.

La démonstration débute par un état de la recherche en deux chapitres (33-172). Le premier passe en revue deux siècles d'études historico-critiques, de Semler à Dibelius, en focalisant sur le statut accordé à l'histoire dans l'œuvre lukanienne; il montre comment on est passé d'une apologétique historique inspirée par le positivisme (l'historique se confond avec le vrai), via la *Tendenzkritik* de l'école de Tübingue, aux doutes de Dibelius (la perception du surnaturel n'est pas accessible à l'investigation historique). Le second volet est consacré au rapport entre kérygme et histoire dans la recherche du XXe siècle: la ligne Dibelius-Haenchen-Conzelmann s'intéresse à l'histoire dans la mesure où s'y déploie l'interpellation kérygmatisque pour l'homme d'aujourd'hui. La thèse dominante est l'historicisation lukanienne du kérygme, contre laquelle Marshall, Cullmann puis Pannenberg vont défendre une valorisation théologique de l'histoire ("*Offenbarung als Geschichte*"). L'auteur retient, de son côté, le rapport dialectique que postule Helmut Flender entre salut et histoire; inscrit dans l'histoire, le salut ne se dissout ni ne se confond avec elle.

Le point de vue heuristique étant posé, il se décline au gré de l'exégèse de quelques textes choisis entre Luc et Actes. Chapitre 3 (173-248): le prologue de Luc (Lc 1,1-4). Ce texte programmatique obéit à deux intentions: la première est de fixer les modalités de la recherche historique de l'auteur (vv. 1-3), tandis que la seconde énonce la visée de son travail, qui est de confirmer la fiabilité de la foi de Théophile (v. 4). A cet égard, le "nous" du v. 2 a une dimension clairement ecclésiologique: inscrits dans le passé, les événements du salut exercent leur effet dans le présent des lecteurs. Définir l'œuvre lukanienne comme une œuvre historiogra-

phique néglige ce fait essentiel que l'auteur déploie son travail d'historien dans le seul but de communiquer les *pragmata* (Lc 1,2), dont la signification est communiquée par le Ressuscité. Son exposé historique n'est nullement apologétique (prouver la foi par l'histoire), mais parénétique: Théophile est invité à une confirmation de l'événement christique, qu'il connaît déjà, en vue d'une appropriation dans son existence concrète (218). Le recours aux conventions historiographiques dans le prologue ne témoigne pas de la dimension historique, mais de la dimension publique et sociale du christianisme. Le récit d'Emmaüs Lc 24,13-35 (chap. 4: 249-303) fait inclusion avec le prologue dans la mesure où la même problématique de l'herméneutique de l'histoire y est traitée, mais avec l'affirmation décisive que l'accès à la reconnaissance des événements du salut trouve dans le Ressuscité sa condition de possibilité. C'est pourquoi, chez Luc, les apparitions du Ressuscité et non le tombeau vide fondent la foi postpascale en la résurrection. "Dass Lukas das Heilsgeschehen *als* Geschichte ist deshalb von der Emmaus-Erzählung aus entschieden zu bestreiten" (292): le récit manifeste en effet que les *res gestae*, considérées en elles-mêmes, sont muettes et doivent être comprises théologiquement pour devenir significantes; seul le Christ ouvre l'accès à la signification, et du coup à la "participation" à l'événement. Le 5^e chapitre (305-356) égrène cette vérité sur quelques textes de l'évangile. Deux axiomes reviennent: a) le concept d'histoire du salut est à récuser, car il sous-estime le rapport critique entre foi et histoire, entre reconnaissance des événements du salut et information historique; b) Luc ne promeut pas une théologie de l'histoire, mais une reconnaissance de la foi dans l'histoire grâce à la parole révélatrice du Ressuscité.

Le 6^e chapitre (357-412) s'attache aux apparitions du Ressuscité durant les 40 jours (Ac 1,1-14). La référence à la parousie (Ac 1,11) fait comprendre que Jésus n'est plus visible au sein de l'histoire, mais que jusqu'à son retour, il manifeste sa présence dans la prédication fondée sur le témoignage des apôtres. Ce témoignage n'est pas identifiable au témoignage oculaire historique, mais consiste en une connaissance du salut acquise par la médiation de l'auto-révélation (*Selbsterschliessung*) du Ressuscité. Au passage, l'idée que le récit de l'Ascension résulte d'une historicisation lucanienne du kérygme pascal est catégoriquement rejetée. Le 7^e chapitre focalise sur la Pentecôte en tant que clef de compréhension de l'histoire (413-459). Le discours de Pierre (2,14-41) fait comprendre que seule la foi résurrectionnelle permet de rendre compte théologiquement de l'activité de Jésus. Jésus est simultanément le fondement du salut et la condition de possibilité de sa reconnaissance. Deux thèses sur la théologie lucanienne sont également défendues: c'est dans l'histoire de l'Eglise que Luc transfère l'eschatologisation de l'agir de Dieu; la mort de Jésus n'est pas, contrairement à ce que répète la ligne Dibelius-Haenchen-Conzelmann, dépourvue de signification sotériologique. Le chapitre

8 (461-504) confirme ces thèses à l'occasion d'une lecture cursive des Actes, centrée sur Etienne (Ac 7), la conversion de Paul (Ac 9), Corneille (Ac 10) et la conclusion des Actes (28,23-31). Bauspiess répète que pour Luc, l'histoire n'est pas *per se* un lieu de reconnaissance de l'activité du Christ, mais elle ne l'est que sous la condition d'une référence à l'événement christique, auquel le témoignage pascal donne accès. C'est l'épiphanie du salut dans l'histoire qui intéresse exclusivement Luc. Ce dernier ne raconte pas la mort de Paul, car à ses yeux l'arrivée à Rome constitue l'accomplissement du mandat énoncé en Ac 1,8. Le 9^e chapitre (505-533) résume le point de vue défendu par l'auteur de la thèse, distinguant l'œuvre lucanienne à la fois de l'historiographie hellénistique pragmatique (illustrée par Lucien de Samosate) et de l'historiographie ecclésiastique d'Eusèbe de Césarée (à visée apologétique).

Bauspiess s'oppose donc frontalement au courant dominant de la recherche lucanienne entraîné par les travaux de l'école allemande (Dibelius, Haenchen, Conzelmann, à qui il faudrait ajouter Plümacher). Ses thèmes sont chers à la théologie protestante évangélique: défense de l'historicité des textes, compréhension du salut réservée aux croyants, foi octroyée par un don du Ressuscité. Sur le fait qu'il n'y a pas d'immédiateté dans le passage du savoir historique au savoir théologique (459), et que l'œuvre lucanienne est au service de ce dernier, on donnera raison à l'auteur. Le paradigme historiographique hellénistique appliqué à Luc-Actes a tendance à sous-estimer l'importance de l'herméneutique théologique des *res gestae*, même si la visée proprement théologique de l'historiographie lucanienne ne lui est pas étrangère. Toutefois, à trop insister sur la dimension herméneutique du rapport à l'histoire, on saisit moins pourquoi l'auteur des Actes s'est efforcé à une telle précision chronologique et topographique (cf. Ac 13-28), ni pourquoi il a tenu à insérer l'histoire de Jésus et de ses disciples au sein de l'histoire universelle (i.e. l'actualité gréco-romaine). Ne faut-il pas aussi reconnaître que ce même souci de vérité, auquel tient Bauspiess, a conduit Luc à veiller à la configuration concrète des événements du salut dans l'histoire? L'imposante bibliographie (45 pages) atteste que l'auteur a abondamment consulté la littérature secondaire, essentiellement allemande; la recherche anglo-saxonne est peu présente en note, le français pratiquement absent.

Une remarque pour terminer. Qu'une thèse de doctorat impose la démonstration détaillée du savoir du doctorant est académiquement indiscutable. Est-il, à l'inverse, indispensable de publier en 607 pages l'intégralité d'une dissertation dont la thèse, simple et forte, est énoncée d'emblée et inlassablement répétée au fil du travail? Le rédacteur de cette recension n'en est pas certain.

Frank J. MATERA, *God's Saving Grace. A Pauline Theology*, Grand Rapids, Michigan – Cambridge, U. K., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012. xvi- 267 p. 15 × 23. \$28,00 - £18.99

La presente pubblicazione offre una trattazione lineare della teologia paolina adatta all'ambiente accademico e fruibile anche per la divulgazione scientifica. Il volume è stato rielaborato sulla base di un precedente testo scolastico, che raccoglieva cinque principali nuclei della teologia paolina: la cristologia, la soteriologia, l'etica, l'ecclesiologia e l'escatologia. Nella *Prefazione* l'autore dichiara la necessità di formulare una sintesi unitaria e progressiva del percorso teologico di Paolo quale necessario collegamento tra ricerca esegetica e pensiero teologico-dottrinale dell'epistolario. Nel procedere all'opera di sintesi, l'autore rivela un notevole estro creativo insieme a una non comune sensibilità didattica. Pertanto il presente lavoro favorisce una visione chiara della teologia paolina, anche alla luce degli orientamenti della *New Perspective* (cf. J.D.G. Dunn, "The New Perspective on Paul: whence, what, whither?", *The New Perspective on Paul. Collected Essays* [WUNT 185; Tübingen 2005] 1-88; M. Bachmann, "J.D.G. Dunn und die neue Paulusperspektive", *TZ* 63 [2007] 25-43).

L'itinerario del libro si articola in 8 capitoli, elaborati secondo uno sviluppo tematico-progressivo ben motivato dall'autore. Le chiavi interpretative del suo orientamento sono sintetizzate fin dal primo capitolo (1-15), in cui si premette: "Paul was not writing as a theologian, nor did he attempt to construct a coherent theological system" (1). La sistematizzazione della proposta implica la presa di coscienza della natura pastorale e missionaria dell'opera dell'Apostolo (cf. F. Pastor Ramos, *Para mí, vivir es Cristo. Teología de san Pablo. Persona, experiencia, pensamiento, anuncio* [Estella, Navarra 2010] 21-22). Tale chiarificazione impone una distinzione tra ciò che chiamiamo propriamente la "teologia di Paolo", in quanto personaggio storico che vive la propria missione, rispetto alla "teologia paolina" che si ricava dalla lettura delle tredici lettere canoniche a lui attribuite. Sul piano metodologico l'autore precisa la scelta di studiare i fondamenti della "teologia paolina": "My own work is a Pauline theology that deals with the theology that underlies and comes to expression in the thirteen letters the New Testament attributes to Paul (the Pauline Corpus)" (5). Poiché la riflessione teologica è inseparabile dall'interpretazione che l'Apostolo fornisce del messaggio evangelico, si evidenzia la necessità di collegare l'azione pastorale dell'Apostolo con le concrete forme della sua sintesi su Dio, Cristo, lo Spirito, sull'essere umano e sul mondo creato.

Secondo Matera, l'elemento che fornisce coerenza e unità al messaggio teologico dell'epistolario è rappresentato dalla "grazia salvifica di Dio" (God's saving grace) e dall'intreccio di "tre narrazioni" che costituiscono il fondamento della teologia paolina: la vita di Paolo, il dono

della grazia salvifica di Dio in Cristo e la sua partecipazione a quanti sono in Cristo. A partire da questa duplice «chiave ermeneutica», l'autore sviluppa il dinamismo del pensiero paolino guidato dalla riflessione "sulla grazia salvifica di Dio". Nel secondo capitolo (16-48) si sottolinea come l'esperienza di Damasco rappresenta il "centro generativo" (the Generative Center) dell'intero processo teologico, da cui si comprende il ruolo del vangelo e dell'apostolato di Paolo. Nel terzo capitolo (49-83) si focalizza la dimensione cristologica della teologia paolina, evidenziando la peculiarità dei titoli cristologici (figlio-figlio di Dio, Cristo-messia, Gesù-Signore) e le forme inniche riguardanti la preesistenza del Figlio (cf. 1 Cor 15,23-28; Fil 2,6-11; Col 1,15-20; Ef 1,20-23; 1Tm 3,16) e la sua connotazione corporativa. Il quarto capitolo (84-125) mostra la notevole consistenza soteriologica del pensiero paolino. L'esperienza della "grazia salvifica di Dio" permette all'Apostolo di approfondire la condizione umana e le conseguenze prodotte dal dramma del peccato. L'autore riassume la trattazione in due tappe. In primo luogo egli passa in rassegna i temi dominanti che descrivono la condizione negativa dell'uomo peccatore (alienazione da Dio, la sottomissione al potere del peccato e della morte, del secolo presente, della legge). Nella seconda tappa descrive la situazione dell'uomo in Cristo: la giustificazione, riconciliazione, la redenzione, la libertà, il perdono, la santificazione, la trasformazione e la nuova creazione.

Nel quinto capitolo (126-155) si puntualizza il ruolo della grazia salvifica nella costituzione della comunità ecclesiale (*ekklēsia*). L'autore fotografa lo sviluppo dell'identità ecclesiale del "popolo di Dio", presentando la realtà dell'assemblea locale in relazione alla metafora somatologica (cf. 1 Cor 12,12-27) e al processo di integrazione sacramentale (cf. 1 Cor 11,17-34). Il dinamismo ecclesiale basato sulla relazione carismi-ministeri è ulteriormente definito dallo sviluppo istituzionale proprio della terza generazione cristiana (cf. Lettere pastorali). A nostro giudizio, avrebbe richiesto una trattazione maggiore e distinta, il ruolo di Israele nel progetto divino (cf. 1 Cor 10,1-13; Rm 9-11). Il sesto capitolo (156-185) tratta dell'etica paolina secondo cinque temi: a) la soteriologia; b) lo Spirito Santo; c) i sacramenti; d) il comandamento dell'amore; e) l'escatologia. Presentando l'insegnamento morale dell'Apostolo si afferma: "The newness of Paul's moral teaching is found in the newness of life he experienced in Christ rather than a new ethical system" (157). La natura soteriologica dell'etica qualifica il processo di "cristificazione" del credente e del suo agire morale. Tale processo è frutto dell'azione abilitante dello Spirito (A Spirit-Empowered Ethic) che rende possibile il compimento della vocazione cristiana (cf. 1 Cor 1,26-31). In tale contesto spicca il ruolo del Battesimo e dell'Eucaristia, sacramenti della rigenerazione e della vita cristiana. Non si ravvisano riferimenti al tema del "matrimonio", né approfondimenti circa l'incontro-confronto con il macrocosmo culturale

pagano (cf. l'impiego degli *Haustafeln*). Il rischio di tale riduzione è di presentare il pensiero di Paolo quasi "svincolato" dal suo condizionamento culturale.

La centralità dell'etica paolina è rappresentata dal primato dell'amore (*agapē*), pienezza della legge (Rm 13,10), che Dio ha rivelato in Cristo. Il dono dell'*agapē* si traduce in operosità (cf. 1 Ts 1,3) declinato nelle diverse espressioni di solidarietà (*koinōnia*, *philadelphia*, *diakonia*). L'accentuazione escatologica dell'insegnamento etico di Paolo fa da *trait d'union* con la successiva trattazione del settimo capitolo (186-214). L'autore rimarca la singolarità del vocabolario escatologico paolino e sottolinea la condizione esistenziale di attesa dei credenti in vista della risurrezione dalla morte e della vittoria finale di Dio (cf. Rm 8,18-39). Per chi accoglie l'annuncio della salvezza, l'orizzonte dell'eredità celeste si schiuderà con la manifestazione di Cristo (cf. 1 Tm 6,13-15). L'ottavo capitolo (215-249) compendia il percorso didattico, esplicitando il motivo dominante della "grazia divina", rivelata pienamente nella persona e nella missione di Cristo crocifisso e risorto. In questa luce vanno interpretati i numerosi attributi con cui Dio ha scelto di comunicare se stesso e l'intera "economia di salvezza". Matera compendia in sette punti la comprensione dell'essenza di Dio secondo Paolo: a) la teologia paolina identifica Dio e padre del signore nostro Gesù Cristo con il Dio di Israele; b) nelle lettere Dio viene descritto in vari modi; c) Dio è insieme misterioso e noto, trascendente e immanente; d) Dio opera chiamando il popolo alla salvezza sulla base della grazia piuttosto che delle opere; e) la teologia paolina celebra l'economia divina secondo il progetto originario di Dio; f) la teologia paolina è cristologica e l'interpretazione di Dio è svolta attraverso Cristo; g) la teologia paolina è pneumatologica e implicitamente trinitaria.

L'indole prevalentemente didattica della presente pubblicazione si evince anche dalla natura descrittiva dei singoli capitoli. La presentazione dei temi è caratterizzata da uno stile semplice, diretto e comunicativo. Il lettore è abilmente guidato lungo il percorso dell'epistolario con richiami a temi essenziali e parole-chiave. Ogni capitolo termina con un bilancio del tema trattato (Coherence and Meaning: 45; 80; 123; 153; 183; 207; 246). Si evitano accuratamente le problematiche letterarie e si riducono gli approfondimenti esegetici. Alcune principali questioni sono riportate nelle note a piè di pagina, mentre si preferisce suggerire al lettore una bibliografia supplementare al termine di ogni capitolo (For Further Reading: 14; 47; 81; 123; 153; 184; 213; 248). In definitiva, il presente lavoro si caratterizza per la sua agilità di lettura, l'omogeneità metodologica e la sistematicità del metodo impiegato. Nondimeno, l'essenzialità della sua trattazione evidenzia anche il limite della presente proposta, priva di alcuni approfondimenti collegati all'ambiente culturale di Paolo e delle singole comunità ecclesiali. Permane nello sfondo la prevalenza del tema della "grazia salvifica di Dio", che costituisce il *leitmotiv* della sua effi-

cace sintesi, in grado di collegare il mistero dell'opera salvifica di Dio con la caducità della condizione umana.

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Luca ARCARI, *Visioni del figlio dell'uomo nel Libro delle Parabole e nell'Apocalisse* (Antico e Nuovo Testamento 19). Brescia, Morcelliana, 2012, 370 p. 15,5 × 22,5. €26

Este libro procede con la claridad y orden de una tesis doctoral. La *Introducción* presenta netamente sus objetivos: en un estudio ante todo literario-sociológico, que no excluye en absoluto los análisis filológicos ni la investigación histórica, el autor (A.) pretende analizar el sentido de “un como hijo de hombre” en las obras especificadas en el título, aunque sin excluir otras, sean canónicas o no; estudia las relaciones entre oralidad y escritura, el contexto en el que esto ocurre en las dos obras principales, la relación entre un texto visionario y la experiencia del mundo del más allá, es decir, cómo se construye literariamente una experiencia de contacto con el otro mundo y cómo es el proceso de memoria colectiva de escritos o tradiciones, ya considerados sagrados o al menos importantes, cuya relectura y reinterpretación visionaria llevan a formar un sentido tendente a la autodefinition de un grupo: el autor antiguo de las diversas obras estudiadas piensa que su relectura de los textos normativos (la Biblia) y de las tradiciones es el complemento definitivo y la interpretación también definitiva de la tradición.

Nada debo manifestar en contra de todos estos buenos propósitos, que en efecto se cumplen metodológicamente en el desarrollo de la obra de A. En numerosas ocasiones evidencia A. la íntima mezcla de oralidad y escritura, y la relectura y la reinterpretación de textos previamente normativos como la base de la teología tanto judía como judeocristiana.

El capítulo primero estudia el significado y alcance del sintagma “un como hijo de hombre” en el judaísmo del Segundo Templo: en el libro de Daniel; en los textos de Qumrán, en especial 4Q246; los “agentes escatológicos” en IV Esdras (7,28-29; 11,37-12,36; 13,3-13 y 14,9); su posible aparición en el *Testamento y Apocalipsis de Abrahán*; el *Diálogo* de Justino y Trifón. A. se pregunta si pueden iluminar la utilización de “un como hijo de hombre” en el judaísmo del Segundo Templo y responde que no. Respecto a este capítulo haría cuatro observaciones.

Primera: Estoy totalmente de acuerdo con A. en que es errónea la imagen de un mesianismo difuso en torno a “un como hijo de hombre” como título, que fuera comprendido sin explicación alguna en el judaísmo del Segundo Templo, y que este error se basa en una lectura cristiana de la

documentación judía. Segunda: opino que la imagen de Dn 7,13-14 no es interpretada por el autor de Daniel principalmente en clave colectiva (7,20), sino en todo caso angélica (Dn 10,5; 12,). Pero, probablemente, la interpretación en clave personal fue la más impactante. Creo que es cercana a la verdad la tesis de D. Boyarin (*The Jewish Gospels. The Story of the Jewish Christ* [New York 2012]), de que la visión de Daniel es en sí muy antigua, que representa el reemplazo de una divinidad anciana por otra más joven (ejemplo: 'El sustituido por Baal; los Cronidas sustituidos por Zeus), y que el autor de Dn la tomó tal como estaba pero se autocorrigió dándole una interpretación colectiva y luego angélica. Tercera: No me convence nada la interpretación de A. de IV Esdras 12,32 y 13,26 en el sentido de que el autor judío pensaba que el mesías era preexistente. Opino que esta concepción, a la luz del mismo IV Esdras y sobre todo del Libro de las Parábolas (LP), no es admisible en el judaísmo en torno al siglo I a.C. / d.C., si se entiende que el mesías como *ser* humano es ya preexistente. Pienso que 1 Hen 48,2-6 y IV Esdras deben comprenderse como que el autor judío piensa que la idea/concepto del mesías, o juez escatológico sí es preexistente (al igual que la Torá como concepto es preexistente, pero luego se concreta en la Torá mosaica del Sinaí), pero que no lo es el mesías o juez escatológico concreto en el que ese concepto tomará cuerpo real en el tiempo, puesto que por hipótesis ha de ser un humano. Cuarta: metodológicamente me parece incorrecto que, antes de discutir la fecha de composición de LP, se formule la tesis, en p. 83, de que la unanimidad de la tradición sinóptica en atribuir a Jesús los dichos sobre el Hijo del Hombre confirma que esta tradición cristiana ya debía de conocer LP, puesto que nunca antes de este escrito se había formulado la noción de un juez escatológico y/o mesías preexistente y escondido utilizada por los Sinópticos.

El capítulo segundo (“‘Un [como] hijo de hombre’ en el Libro de las Parábolas”) tiene interesantes análisis de contenido y significado con los que estoy de acuerdo. Pero tendría igualmente algunas observaciones. La primera, e importante, me parece que el A. debería haber discutido detenidamente la tesis de M. Casey (*The Solution to the ‘Son of Man’ Problem* [LNTS 343; New York 2007]), pues en ese ensayo se demuestra que ese sintagma no es aún un “título” mesiánico, sino una imagen o figura. La discusión tiene su importancia para dilucidar quién es el responsable en la historia de la tradición de haber utilizado esa imagen ya como título mesiánico expreso. Segunda: personalmente me parece que los argumentos para demostrar que LP fue compuesta antes del siglo I a.C. son muy débiles (cf. A. Piñero, “Enoch as Mediator, Messiah, Judge, and Son of Man in the Book of Parables: A Jewish Response to Early Jewish-Christian Theology?”, *Hen* 35 [2013] 1-44), en especial el pasaje sobre las fuentes termales en 1 Hen 67,8-13 (= Josefo AJ 17,168-172; BJ I 656-658) o la ausencia de LP entre los manuscritos de Qumrán. En todo caso podría tener algo de fuerza 1 Hen 56,5-7 como alusión a los partos inva-

sores de Palestina en el 40 a.C. (BJ 1,248) y la mención de que “un hermano no reconocerá a su propio hermano” como referida a Hircano II y Antígono II en lucha por el trono. Por consiguiente, si no puede probarse con seguridad que LP haya sido compuesto antes del siglo I, el que se argumente que LP ha tenido influencia en la aplicación por parte de los Sinópticos del sintagma “un como hijo de hombre” a Jesús no es procedente.

El capítulo tercero (“‘Un [como] hijo de hombre’ en el Libro del Apocalipsis”) analiza los dos pasajes en los que se encuentra el sintagma: Ap 7,13-16; 14,14-20. Esta sección me parece bien elaborada. El análisis de los textos del Antiguo Testamento que están por debajo del Apocalipsis es correcto e iluminador; la discusión sobre el significado de “un (como) hijo de hombre” es acertado: Jesús es el dirigente de la comunidad ahora y actúa tanto para alabar como para corregir desviaciones dentro del grupo; pero tiene a la vez una función futura como juez escatológico; está bien visto igualmente que el uso de las tradiciones de Daniel y Ezequiel demuestra que el vidente y su grupo tienen ciertas pretensiones sacerdotales y profético-espirituales, lo cual concede autoridad al escrito y al vidente.

Por último, A. argumenta convincentemente que el cap. 71 es un añadido secundario al conjunto de LP 37-70. Pero la pregunta es obvia: ¿por qué fue añadido? No veo, sin embargo, en el libro presente una respuesta clara. No estoy de acuerdo con A. sobre su idea de que tanto en el Apocalipsis como en los Sinópticos “Hijo del Hombre” no es un título, sino solo un símbolo que sirve para expresar diversas funciones mesiánicas de Jesús. A. sostiene que una expresión de este estilo solo es un *título* cuando cumple dos condiciones: a) Que sea admitida como tal por un grupo amplio; b) Que no sea necesario explicar su significado. Pues bien, creo que “Hijo del Hombre” cumple con estos requisitos tanto en los Sinópticos como en el Apocalipsis.

El capítulo cuarto tiene tres secciones: a) Ap y la exégesis visionaria de los Sinópticos; b) La recodificación y reutilización de tradiciones importantes y normativas en otros escritos protocristianos, como la *Ascensión de Isaías* y *Didaché* 16); c) Las interacciones de “un (como) hijo de hombre” en algunos grupos protocristianos (Ignacio y la *Ascensión de Isaías*). Me parece muy interesante la primera sección en la que A. ofrece un análisis minucioso de Mc 13 y paralelos, junto con otros textos sinópticos (unos diez) que tienen ecos en el Apocalipsis. Pero la conclusión de A. es que Ap no depende de la tradición sinóptica en el tema del “Hijo del Hombre”. Ahora bien, esta conclusión me parece excesiva o al menos dudosa. Parece acertado que pueda defenderse que el autor del Apocalipsis no tuvo delante el texto de Mc, Mt y Lc, pero a tenor de los ecos que A. ha enumerado es poco probable que en Asia Menor no se conociera ya a finales del siglo I d.C. la tradición sinóptica.

En mi opinión, el proceso de recepción del sintagma daniélico “un (como) hijo de hombre” en LP, Sinópticos y Apocalipsis –aceptando como

casi evidente que LP fue compuesto antes de la destrucción del Templo en el 70 d.C., aunque se dude de si fue precisamente en el siglo I a.C. — podría ser el siguiente: 1) LP 37-70 es el primer testimonio de la recepción de “un como hijo de hombre” considerado individualmente. Aunque en ningún sitio de LP 37-70 se haga una equiparación expresa entre Henoc y “un como hijo de hombre” (son diferenciados expresamente en 46,1 y en 70,1), el grupo detrás de LP creía comúnmente que ese “hijo de hombre” era Henoc. 2) LP circulaba antes de la composición de Marcos (ca. 71) entre grupos apocalípticos varios, entre ellos alguno(s) protocristiano(s). 3) Partiendo del dato tradicional de que Jesús utilizó el sintagma “hijo de hombre” para designarse a sí mismo modestamente en tercera persona como ser humano, Marcos es el primero que lo utiliza como título mesiánico expreso y se lo aplica a Jesús. Es muy probable que Marcos actuara polémicamente contra el grupo de henóquicos que ya proclamaban que el “hijo de hombre” futuro y juez escatológico era Henoc. 4) Tras la difusión del escrito de Marcos, los henóquicos reaccionan y componen el capítulo 71 de LP, que proclama expresamente que Henoc es ese “hijo de hombre”. 5) Ante esta reacción, el Apocalipsis reacciona a su vez contra los henóquicos y atribuye la función de juez escatológico a Jesús, a quien presenta además como “Alfa y Omega” y como el Cordero que posee también un trono celeste.

Estas acciones y reacciones entre grupos *judíos* — unos judeocristianos; otros, henóquicos — deben entenderse como una polémica *intrajudía* de comunidades de tenor apocalíptico que responden a una misma concepción de un fin del mundo inmediato y que esperan al Juez, que está a punto de llegar. Para unos ese juez es Henoc; para otros es Jesús. Y por último, esta polémica se sitúa sociológicamente dentro del ámbito de la plasmación concreta de un proceso iniciado en el siglo IV a.C.: las especulaciones sobre un agente de Yahvé humano-divino, que se sienta en el trono celestial, y que en el judaísmo del siglo II d.C. hace su aparición pública sobre todo en 3 Henoc hebreo (de redacción muy tardía, pero de base del siglo II), como en la literatura talmúdica que refleja el período de R. Aquiba (*bHagiga*, 15a; *bSanedrín*, 38b; *Sifré al Deuteronomio*, 329).

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Paolo SACCHI, *La Bibbia dei Settanta. 1. Pentateuco*, a cura di Paolo Lucca. Brescia, Morcelliana Edizioni, 2012. 5-1022 p. 22 × 15. €60,00

The Hellenist W. Gerson Rabinowitz described the work of translation as “the impossible art”. Rabinowitz’s observation was the fruit of decades of having labored over the prose of Plato and Aristotle. Another perspective is that of U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, who wrote: “The philologist is once for all an interpreter, but not interpreter of the words alone. Then he will never completely understand if he does not understand the soul from which they come. He must be the interpreter of this soul also” (*Platon*, Berlin 1919, I, 4). The publication of a new Italian translation of the Septuagint, *La Bibbia dei Settanta*, volume 1, *Pentateuco*, brings to mind the observations of both Rabinowitz and Wilamowitz-Moellendorff. This fresh translation with extensive notes and numerous clarifications about the translation, a noble attempt to confront “the impossible art” of translation and to “understand the soul” of the words that make up this work, is a welcome addition, despite its shortcomings, to other recent translations of the Septuagint.

Several new translations of the LXX have appeared in the last few years and these contemporary translations have increased the Septuagint’s overall recognition for its unique contribution to theology and history. The French project, *La Bible d’Alexandrie*, still far from completion, first published *Genèse* in 1986 and the most recent addition in the series, *Esther*, was published in 2012. *The New English Translation of the Septuagint and the other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under that Title* (NETS), edited by Albert Pietersam and Benjamin G. Wright, has appeared in its entirety (Oxford 2007). *Septuaginta Deutsch. Das griechische Alte Testament in deutscher Übersetzung* (LXX.D), was edited by Martin Karrer and Wolfgang Kraus (Stuttgart 2009). In addition to their one-volume translation, their two-volume commentary, *Erläuterungen und Kommentare zum griechischen Alten Testament*, appeared in 2011. *El Pentateuco* of *La Biblia Griega Septuaginta* (Salamanca 2008) and volumes 2 and 3, *Libros Históricos* (Salamanca 2011) and *Libros poéticos y sapienciales* (Salamanca 2013), were edited by Natalio Fernández Marcos, María Victoria Spottorno Díaz-Caro *et alii*. This recent resurgence of LXX translations may be due to a surmise that competence in the ancient languages adequate to such an endeavor will not long outlive the current generation.

The new translation of the Septuagint prints Alfred Rahlfs’ *editio minor* of the LXX on the verso and the Italian on the following recto. In some of the earlier translations (e.g., *La Bible d’Alexandrie*) the decision

to translate Rahlfs' text was made simply because the edition of A.E. Brook and N. McLean was never to appear and that the Göttingen edition was incomplete. However, the Göttingen critical editions of the Pentateuch, edited by John Wevers, are now available and are unequivocally superior to Rahlfs' text. Wevers' Göttingen editions of the Pentateuch are the best we have. Rahlfs' *Handausgabe*, based only on three major uncial codices (B, S, A), should not be used as an alternative to the *editio maior* of Göttingen. It is worth noting that Rahlfs' specific aim was to provide "ministers and students" with a reliable pocket edition of the LXX. (See p. xxxiv of the 2006 reprint.) An initial difficulty with *La Bibbia dei Settanta*, then, is that even though Wevers' critical editions of the Pentateuch are now available, the editors have simply adopted and printed the 1935 edition of Rahlfs. The 2006 2nd revised addition of Rahlfs by Robert Hanhart had not yet appeared when work on this new translation had begun. This reviewer is not convinced of the value of printing *any* Greek text alongside the translation (none of the major recent LXX translations is accompanied by a Greek text). The editors of the Italian translation, moreover, having adopted Rahlfs' inferior Greek text, put the reader at a further disadvantage by failing to include his pertinent *apparatus criticus*. The Greek text of the Septuagint is not infrequently problematic and the lack of a critical apparatus may give the false impression that the text is certain and fixed. The Göttingen editions offer us texts that demonstrate the complexities of the history of the transmission of the text by presenting a form of the text that precedes all recensions and revisions. There is nothing in the many verbose and redundant introductions (repetitious information concerning the *Letter of Aristeas*, the name and the origins of the LXX, the LXX and the New Testament, Hebrew text, Alexandrian Judaism, etc.) to this volume that satisfactorily addresses the text's transmission history. One often detects a discrepancy between the general introduction to the Pentateuch and the introductory comments made by the individual translators. In brief, this volume would have been improved by a more severe editorial hand.

The notes to the translations are sometimes very helpful in clarifying the translation but often one gets the impression that the translators have simply "borrowed" from the work of others, in particular from John Wevers' commentaries on the Greek text of the Pentateuch, without sufficient acknowledgement. For example, see pp. 113-114, footnote 10, at Gen 1,11, where the translator refers to p. 6 of Wevers' "Notes on the Greek text of Genesis". Most, if not all of the information provided, comes from Wevers. The translator then proceeds to reproduce Marguerite Harl's French rendering of the same verse. At this same note, the translator informs us that the original meaning of *χόρτος* is that of a "luogo recinato per il pascolo". There is no evidence for this. LSJ is perhaps the culprit. It seems that the translator does not always have a critical eye when work-

ing with the lexicographical material at hand. In addition, why is it necessary to say the obvious (113): “il greco usa χόρτος, “erba” ... come complemento di βοτάνην, “pascolo”, “pastura”? (On the same page, it is unclear why the second half of Gen 1,2, καὶ πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἐπέφερετο ἐπάνω τοῦ ὕδατος, is left untranslated.) Finally, a single statement would suffice to remind the reader of the utility of comparing the English, French, German and Spanish translations in order to assess the different options in difficult passages. It would then be unnecessary for the translators constantly to cite other translations and thus add a plethora of cumbersome footnotes.

A further difficulty with this new edition is the decision to transliterate Hebrew words and phrases. The transliteration of Biblical Hebrew words in scholarly works can serve one of three purposes. First, there are occasions in which the author wishes to signal a departure from the Masoretic pointing of the text, and which departure is made clear by means of his transliteration. Second, there are places in which the Masoretic pointing itself is ambiguous or doubtful (e.g., in the interpretation of the dagesh dirimens), whence the transliteration makes the author's reading plain. Finally, in works intended for Hebrew-less readers, the rendering of individual key Hebrew words in transliteration makes it easier to follow the argument and to make connections between lexically related terms. In each case the Hebrew subject to transliteration is an individual word or syntagma. Transliteration of whole verses or larger text units serves no purpose whatever. The translators of this volume undoubtedly have the Hebrew-less readers in mind, but there is so much ambiguous and inconsistently applied transliteration, much of which is simply wrong. (I have noted several errors in transliteration. For example, p. 261, read *ha'areš* for *ha'ares*; p. 377, read *šilluḥèha* for *šilluḥèah*; p. 640, read *qadeš* for *qòdeš*). All of this makes the reading of this tome and its explanatory notes onerous without compensatory enlightenment.

My major difficulty with this publication is its failure to articulate the theoretical framework, character, or principles that underlie the translation of the Hebrew into Greek and the Greek into Italian. The editors have simply not addressed certain fundamental theoretical issues of translation. Following James Barr (*The Typology of Literalism in Ancient Biblical Translations* [Göttingen 1979] 281), the translation technique of the LXX “has to concern itself much of the time with variations within a basically literal approach; different kinds of literality, diverse levels of literal connection, and various kinds of departure from the literal”. What “translation technique” did the translators of the LXX use and how does the study of the syntax of the LXX and the translation of grammatical structures effect their work? What are the individual translators' techniques that lead them from the *Vorlage* to the translation? What is the perceived linguistic relationship between the Hebrew and Greek texts? How can the act of translation become an authentic transformational process? What about bilingual interference?

When one attempts to translate the Greek text of the LXX into a modern language, the emphasis should be on the Greek (target language) and not on the source language (Hebrew). Do the translators of this volume succeed in understanding sufficiently what the original translator of the Hebrew into Greek thought his text to mean or do they fall into the trap of transferring the meaning of the source language into that of the target language? One can only evaluate the success of the “translation technique” (the choice of equivalents) by looking at a few individual cases that are well-known to everyone in the field.

1) The translation of *θάλασσα* at Gen 13,14, *πρὸς βορρᾶν καὶ λίβα καὶ ἀνατολὰς καὶ θάλασσαν*, as “verso nord, sud, levante e il mare” is correct. The modern translator’s point of departure should be based on the assumption that the Greek words of the LXX mean what Greek words usually mean: their meaning is unambiguous until one can demonstrate forcefully that they in fact do have different lexical meanings. An effective modern translator should be concerned to protect the Greek words *as* Greek words in the text. That is to say, one must prevent Greek words from taking on Hebrew meanings and consequently one must not transfer a certain non-Greek meaning onto the modern translation. Even good lexicographical tools of the LXX, unfortunately, tend to keep one eye on the Hebrew and interpret accordingly. (cf. T. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* [Leuven 2009] viii). Muraoka looks at the word *θάλασσα* (323) in its context as one of the four points of the compass and translates it as “west”, knowing that *ⲙ* can indeed take on that meaning and that meaning required by the context is what the word means. My view is that the meaning of the Hebrew word should not take precedence over the normal Greek meaning. To translate *θάλασσα* as “sea” is a choice that states that the Greek word was not intended to appropriate a meaning different from its usual Greek meaning.

2) The pertinent section of the Greek text of Num 5,12-13 reads as follows: (12) Ἄνδρὸς ἀνδρὸς ἔαν παραβῇ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ παρίδῃ αὐτὸν ὑπεριδοῦσα (13) καὶ κοιμηθῇ τις μετ’ αὐτῆς κοίτην σπέρματος: (12) “Of a man, of a man, if his wife transgresses and disregards him despising him (13) and if someone goes to bed with her ...”. The Italian translation of this section (651) reads (12) “Qualora la moglie di qualsiasi uomo abbia commesso tradimento e tenendolo in disprezzo abbia commesso una trasgressione (13) e qualcuno abbia avuto un rapporto sessuale con lei ...”. There is no justification for rendering the meaning of the Hebrew idiom *ⲙⲁⲛ ⲙⲁⲛ*, translated into Greek as *ἀνδρὸς ἀνδρὸς*, by “qualora la moglie di qualsiasi uomo”. The genitives *ἀνδρὸς ἀνδρὸς* make perfect sense when linked with the αὐτοῦ which follows. There was no need to use the nominatives *ἀνὴρ ἀνὴρ*. The sentence makes sense, has meaning, despite its apparent oddness. If the Greek translator had wanted to say “if his wife”, he would have constructed a sentence similar to what follows in verse 13: καὶ κοιμηθῇ τις where *ⲙⲁⲛ* is rendered by *τις*.

It is very easy to criticize and find fault with such a work. Had the editors simply produced a good, accurate translation, which they have actually done for the most part, and provided the reader with a clear and coherent introduction to the LXX without onerous details, elucidating their theoretical principles, their work would be a more attractive instrument in this revival of studies about the Septuagint. This new translation of the Pentateuch is on the whole helpful and reliable but has not, unfortunately, "understood the soul" of the words that make up the Septuagint. We eagerly await volume 2.

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